

UNDER THE TENT: A CHRIST-CENTERED APPROACH TO MENTORING
CHILDREN OF THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED

By

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Abstract

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The church body has often played an active role in providing a level of mentoring to children and the family as a whole. Jesus' pronouncement to allow the children to come unto him (Mt. 19:14) was both a call to action for the church and an invitation to those often forgotten. Mentoring has not always been the word used when a church has an afterschool program, sports league or girls cheering squad groups are formed, but is and is available for all children.

This qualitative research demonstration project examines the lives of children ages 10-12 years old whose parents were formerly incarcerated. Developing a relationship with Christ and having a structured program/ministry specifically designed for these children is the aim.

The first part of the project considers the child, the child's environment, barriers and the impact of positive role models. The final part presents the Mentoring Model and how it can be implemented and concludes with a Call to Action to begin mentoring a child and the training available through the Pressley Family Institute, LLC.

I dedicate this Demonstration Project to my mother, Dorothy M. Macon for her fierce determination to succeed and to have her four daughters succeed despite many obstacles.

She is my absolute hero!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my Site Team, specifically my sister and friend, Juanita Pressley who came through for me every step of the way. To my mentor and Advisor, Rev. Dr. Alfred Correa. To my friend, sister in Christ and Editor, Deirdre McIntosh, I say thank you!

I acknowledge the two people responsible for my very breath, Daddy (Robert Earl Pressley, deceased) and Mommy (Dorothy M. Macon). Mommy's life example is the one I've chosen to emulate because it is the life that led me to Christ, the one from which I gained my strength and the one that won't allow me to give up. I acknowledge my two youngest sisters, Pamela and Marlana for pressing towards excellence.

Finally, I thank my husband, Frank J. Jenkins for freeing me to follow my journey towards self-actualization academically and to my wonderful two children for staying up with me and praying for me to finish this project strong,

Jason Alexandre and Jaala Alise. It is for you two that I do all that I do.

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CHAPTER 1 HOW DID WE GET HERE?

June 12, 1982 ...

It was the end of the 10th grade. I was going to be a junior when school reopened! I'd been elected Chaplain of the Student Council. My first school-wide responsibility was to deliver the Graduation Prayer. Having never prayed in public, I was so nervous and had no idea as to what I should pray or say. I was only 15 years old. No one would think anything of my prayer. Why did I have to do this in front of over 1,000 people! So I asked God what I should pray. God's response was for me to pray the Lord's Prayer. That is exactly what I did! The graduates, parents, teachers, Principal and all were very pleased. Yes, this was the beginning of what would be a great junior year. Then the bottom dropped out of my plans. On June 12, 1982, my mom had had enough! She decided to leave my father.

My courageous mother stepped out on her faith in God, packed what she could in her station wagon car, took her two teenage and two toddler daughters and headed north to New York City. If ever there was a definition of conflicted emotion—that is exactly how I would describe my personal feelings. I knew that my mother had made her best decision for herself and for us her daughters. At the same time for a 15 year old girl my friends and school were everything and I felt a huge loss.

The truth is that as hard as my mother had tried and as long as she had stayed, the time had simply come for her to ensure the spiritual, physical, emotional, mental and

economic future for herself and her children. Whether deliberate or not I believe she gained her strength from the Word of God which says, “Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well” (3 Jn 1:2 NIV).

She is the model of one who fights for her family’s stability even when the deck is stacked against her. I can only imagine the double whammy she must have endured being married to an ex-convict (the accepted language at the time) and an alcoholic. She must have faced isolation, embarrassment, feelings of shame and perhaps ridicule from family and friends. Never the less, she always remained poised, dignified and always exuded a quiet confidence which suggested “I’m in it to win on my terms.”

Moving to New York City, in 1982, was as much a gutsy move as it was lifesaving and life sustaining. The South Bronx, in 1982, had just stopped burning literally but it now had the emergence of crack cocaine as the new threat to daily existence for the more than 1M residents of the Bronx.¹ The Apostle Paul writes to those who find themselves in what might seem like the fight of their lives. In Ephesians 6:13 it is recorded, “Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”

Not knowing what this sudden move to New York City would hold for her and her daughters but understanding fully that the evil she’d left behind may have driven her to a new and unfamiliar evil—my mother’s unwavering faith in God compelled her to STAND!

¹ U. S. Bureau of the Census, “Population Publications: Quick Facts Bronx County, NY,” <https://www.census.gov/prod/www/population.html> (accessed November 16, 2016).

My mother's ability to stand included a plan of action. Though she never sat down with the four of us and said this is what it's going to take to be successful—we were very well aware of her plan of excellence not only for us but also for herself:

- She was always age-appropriately honest with us as it related to the separation from our father and provided him with access to us. (Restorative Justice)
- She shared her expectations with my oldest sister, Juanita, and me for being responsible for helping with our younger sisters, Pamela and Marlana. (The Family Village)
- She shared with all four of us her expectations of academic excellence. (Carefully Selected the Best Schools for Each of Us)
- She made faith in Jesus Christ the foundation of our family existence (Found a new church home within 2 weeks of arriving in NYC); and
- She consistently provided us with recreational and extracurricular activities/exposure (Family Outings/Involvement in Community and Church Programs)

I've never asked her if she had all of this written down, but in my opinion it was a blueprint for success that continues to pay dividends. My mother, Dorothy M., placed her trust in Jesus, committed herself to her children and to their success as well as her own and here are the results:

- Dorothy M.—B.A. Psychology, M.A. Family Psychology, M.A. Gerontology, M.S. Diversity and 1 year toward a PhD. in Psychology;
- Juanita E.—B.A. Fine Arts, M.S. Childhood Ed. Ed.M. Educational Leadership, Advance Ed.M. Ed Leadership Superintendent 2017 expected PhD. Educational Leadership;
- Deborah D.—B.A. Psychology, M.A. Public Policy and Administration, MDiv. and with the completion of the requirements (this paper and Oral Defense) Doctor of Ministry;
- Pamela Y.—B.A. Forensic Psychology, B.S. Legal Studies, M.P.A., Court Administration, JD, General and Litigation; and
- Marlana M. – B.S. Biology, M.S. Secondary Education.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13), my mother provided for all of our success “Under the Tent”! While many may ask of children of the formerly incarcerated, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” (Jn 1:46). My simple reply would be just as Philip's was, “Come and see” (Jn 1:46b).

To be sure, the “Pressley Girls” are not the only children of the formerly incarcerated to have achieved success. However, to ensure that there will be many others is a matter of sincere deliberation that must be undertaken by many who believe that having a foundation of faith and includes other critical elements is the key to the success of this often overlooked group.

CHAPTER 2

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

When one takes time to ponder the connectedness of all of the events in one's life, it is then where the truth is discovered that as the Bible says "and we know all things work together for the good of those who love the Lord and who have been called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28 NIV). As a young girl growing up, in Montgomery, Alabama, I remember the joys and pains that my parents, oldest sister and I experienced. My mother always made it a priority to ensure that my sister and I led as normal a life as possible. She did everything within her power and strength to give us a normal and happy childhood. She did this against many trials, tribulations and challenges that would have otherwise broken many. Parenthetically, when I reflect back on my mother's incredible strength, endurance and perseverance I am reminded of the scripture text, "We are hard pressed on every side but not crushed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed" (2Cor 4:8-9). You see, Mama (how I always see her) was hard pressed to raise godly children in an setting that didn't easily lend itself to such. Mama was married to Daddy and at the time they were blessed with two children which would eventually grow to include two more. We would become the "Four Pressley Girls", Juanita, Deborah (that's me), Pamela and Marlana. Everyone who met us knew that we were loved by both our parents. There was a certain pride that daddy had for his girls as he never showed any sign of regret that one of us wasn't a boy. Mama in her

gentleness knew that she was raising wonderful, well-mannered and respectful girls as those were the compliments constantly offered.

What was perplexing, to mama and to many others, was daddy's willingness to risk it all by becoming involved in criminal activity that would for a brief period separate him from his family. Daddy had become a statistic. He was incarcerated when Juanita and I were in our formative years and prior to the birth of Pamela and Marlana.

More than 2.7 million children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent and approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.² As Senior Pastor, at Faith @ Work Christian Church in Bronx, NY, I work with the at-risk group of children whose parents have had criminal justice involvement and I've witnessed the affects it has on the children. This demonstration project will create a training process that will prepare leaders to support affected youth ages 10-12 through the implementation of a comprehensive mentoring process.

This is a story that has been told and retold many times but what is unique, in my assessment, is mama's response. Mama could have chosen, as many parents do, to isolate us from daddy in an effort to "teach him" about consequences. Instead, mama remained consistent in modeling the love of Jesus. She refused to be in despair over the unexpected separation and did what many wouldn't have—she took us to visit daddy in the penitentiary! So many family members abandon their incarcerated loved ones during the time of their incarceration. This is perhaps the time that they need those relationships most.

² "Collateral Costs: Incarceration's 'Effect on Economic Mobility,'" Pew Research Center, 2010, www.pewtrusts.org (accessed November 12, 2016).

My father was incarcerated at the Holman Correctional Facility, in Atmore, Alabama. Quite frankly, to this day I don't know what crime he committed that landed him in one of the most violent prisons in Alabama and perhaps one of the most notorious in the nation. Opened in December 1969, "the facility was built to house 581 inmates.

Holman now holds more than a thousand prisoners."³ It has 630 general population beds, 200 single cells and 168 death row cells, for a capacity of 998 maximum through minimum custody inmates, including a large contingent of life without parole inmates.⁴

Holman Correctional Facility was the subject of a documentary on MSNBC entitled, *Lockup: Holman Extended Stay* (2006).⁵

I assure you that as a 7-8 year old girl those facts neither impressed me nor did they cross my mind. What did cross my mind was fear, excitement, and love. You see a little girl only understands and only feels what she receives in terms of knowledge and love. My mother had always been truthful with my oldest sister and me—but in a way that was appropriate for our age. The only thing that she never did was denigrate, emasculate or demean my father. Instead she reassured us of his love for us. She supported us emotionally, physically, academically and most of all spiritually. While I feel as if there was a lot my mother shared—I know that there was so much more that she had to endure alone. She did then as she does now, draw her quiet strength from God.

³ Alan, Blinder, "Alabama Prison Uprisings Come as States Grapple With How to Fix System," *New York Times*, Retrieved March 16, 2016.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <http://www.nbcnews.com/id/22083055/ns/msnbc-documentaries/t/lockup-holman-extended-stay/#.WliVWxsrLb0stay#.WliVWxsrLb0> (accessed November 16, 2016).

There's never been a time in my life that I didn't know my mother's priorities. God first, family next and leaving a good footprint wherever her feet landed. So though our family was "broken" and interrupted it was the steady guidance of our mother through that perilous time that kept us intact. My mother was our first and staunchest spiritual leader and guide. Through her faith, in God's Sovereignty, she determined that her daughters would know, love and respect their father though he'd made poor decisions that physically broke our family apart. Growing up in an environment where faith in God was central to all we did leads me to believe that through the development of a deep relationship with God everyone can live a life of success beyond the circumstances to which they have either been born or have had to live through.

Nelson Mandela once said, "Religion is one of the most important forces in the world. Whether you are a Christian, Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew, or a Hindu, religion is a great force, and it can help one have command of one's own morality, one's own behavior, and one's own attitude."⁶ I believe in second chances, for all humanity, this quote by the great Nelson Mandela stirs my soul. It is one of profound necessity for anyone who's ever been incarcerated and for the people who love them. For many and various reasons literally millions of United States citizens find themselves incarcerated at either the local, State or federal levels of government every year. A large percentage of this number will, after release, find themselves returning and often it becomes the vicious cycle of life for many who through it all lose not only hope but the love and support of a

⁶ John Battersby, "The Legacy of Mandela," Reconnect Africa, 2000, <http://www.reconnectafrica.com/leadership/the-legacy-of-madela.html> (accessed December 5, 2014).

once loving and supportive family.⁷ It is my strong conviction that there has been a disconnection in the spiritual formation of the individual who has been incarcerated and who continues to recidivate. This has undoubtedly left an impression on the family which awaits the return of the incarcerated member. Some families are drawn to faith by the experience and others lose faith. Believing that faith is key to reducing recidivism and avoiding incarceration, for the children of the incarcerated, this project will address the spiritual formation of these families through practical and faith services, delivered through the Under the Tent Mentoring Model. “Familial incarceration can be characterized as an “ambiguous loss” leading to “disenfranchised grief.”⁸ This is the challenge I addressed in this project, with a focus on the children of the formerly incarcerated ages 10-12 years.

I have created a mentoring model and curriculum designed specifically for these children which also provide a forgiving, healing, restorative community for the formerly incarcerated parent with a focus on reducing recidivism and ensuring that there are viable alternatives—where all involved are committed and determined to succeed, recognize and acknowledge that central to success is a vibrant and cultivated life in Christ. Parenthetically, while this is unapologetically a Christ-Centered Mentoring Curriculum, it is available to those of other faith-traditions in the Spirit of Christ. This determination is in keeping with Jesus Christ’s testimony, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice and there shall be one flock and one shepherd (John 10:16 NIV). Guided by the LORD, the Under the Tent Mentoring

⁷ Phillips, S. and T. Gates, “A Conceptual Framework For Understanding The Stigmatization Of Children Of Incarcerated Parents,” *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 20 (2010): 286-294.

⁸Joan Arditti, *Parental Incarceration and the Family* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 103-105.

Curriculum is a part of the newly established, Pressley Family Institute, LLC and is the flagship curriculum through which many will be trained, blessed, healed and many families will become spiritually-centered successes.

This project was implemented in my current hometown, Bronx, New York. The Northeast Bronx to be exact. I believe that one should always seek to address issues within one's own community first in order to have a greater impact elsewhere. I served for two years on the Bronx Reentry Task Force and have served for the last several years for the New York Police Department (NYPD) as a Clergy Liaison in the 45th Precinct (bordering the 47th Precinct) and have been affiliated with the New York City (NYC) Department of Probation. I have drawn from all of these relationships to provide resources to those within my church who will implement the curriculum through the development of a Mentoring Program, meeting the unique criteria. The project was implemented in Faith @ Work Christian Church, on September 17, 2016, at which time seven members (7) of the church were trained on the curriculum and are now prepared to fully implement the program at our church.

Our church's motto is that we are "Christ-centered, Family-focused, with Power and Authority." It is in this spirit that we will seek to support the children of the formerly incarcerated ages 10-12 years old and their families. A major component of the Mentoring Curriculum is worship integration. Many churches and para-church organizations may find it necessary to create a unique worship experience for this group. In order for this to be properly implemented at our church, it may be necessary for Faith @ Work Christian Church to design a second worship service as there is a recognition

that life has dealt these families many blows and encouragement through faith, we believe, will help them in staying focused on regaining their family strength.

Faith @ Work Christian Church is the church where I pastor along with my husband. The church was founded October 9, 2005 with a mission to reach men, women, boys and girls and to help them live up to their full potential through teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As the number of those incarcerated continues to climb serving this population's family has become an important part of that initial mission statement. That I suppose is one of the blessings of having a church mission to serve all of God's created. Though never intentionally targeted towards this population, my own identity and successes compelled me to now become intentional. My intentionality grows out of once being one of the children of a formerly incarcerated parent. Not fully understanding as a child but realizing that there must have been something that kept my father from never returning to the penitentiary, and I believe that was his love and desire to have an active role in the lives of his children and to ensure that we never made the same choices he did.

Faith @ Work Christian Church is located in a unique community within the Bronx, New York. It is in the Coop City area of the northeast Bronx. It is a "city" within a city with 60,000 middle income families. It is considered the largest cooperative housing development in the United States and holds the distinction of being a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC). In addition, to these unique qualities, Coop City is strategically located just two miles east of one of the most dangerous public housing projects, Edenwald Houses. The Edenwald Houses Projects are two miles south of one of Westchester County, New York's most prestigious communities, New

Rochelle, New York. This is significant in that while Coop City is a middle income community it borders a dangerous community and a safer community, and within it are families which meet the criteria of the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum. So the reality is that zip codes do not determine the conditions of children and families nor does it exclude the need we all have for a viable relationship with God. Having a relationship with God is what will ultimately bring us all to a successful life in Christ and on earth. The Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum will be taught in churches that have decided to be intentional in their outreach to this vulnerable group of children who need a mentor to help them succeed in life despite their beginnings.

CHAPTER 3 WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?

In the Gospel According to Matthew, Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Mt 19:14). Holding many interpretations for many according to their social location—for me the most significant interpretation points to the failure of adults to shepherd the young into a thriving adulthood. This failure has left too many vulnerable to the failing education systems, poverty, homelessness and far too many becoming known to the juvenile justice system.

While the global community of adults bear responsibility, according to the biblical passage of Mark 10:13, Jesus holds those who know the Gospel to a greater standard. The body of Christ seems to have stopped doing as Christ did. Christ was said to have taken “the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them” (Mt 19:16). How does the church respond to these vulnerable children? More specifically, how does the church create sustainable alternatives to involvement with the criminal justice system for youth between the ages of 10-12 years old?

Commenting on “the shameful silence of too many black ministers”, journalist Earl Ofari Hutchinson writes in *The Disappearance of Black Leadership*: “Many black ministers and church members were stone silent on the rollback of affirmative action, the assault on civil liberties, the gutting of job and social programs, the slash in health care programs, the disparities in the criminal justice system, the rise in racially-motivated

violence, the deterioration in public education, the draconian cuts to welfare, the surge in police abuse and homelessness during the 1980s and 1990s.”⁹

Mr. Hutchinson’s indictment of the [black] church is in no way overstated as each area highlighted is one which has a direct effect on the neediest, the children. Though published in 2000 with what I believe to have been a call to accountability for the church, sadly in the year 2017 as this nation has just elected the 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, each of these issues stand under further attack and the lives of the children are further jeopardized. The body of Christ is required to awaken and “let the children” come to Jesus.

“In order to mobilize a new level of accountability for clergy and other community leaders a new culture of village accountability will be necessary. The community needs to “call out” their leaders and request a declaration of their vision for serving and transforming the community. Such leaders should be encouraged to explain what they are doing to ameliorate the problem or exorcise the demons that harm our children and communal well-being.”¹⁰ This project is my response to the clarion call to accountability as a member of the clergy. As you continue to read you will come to find that the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum has created a deliberate process through which a confidence in the church can be restored by the children and families who are participants in the programs developed and designed just for them.

Prior to the start of the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum Training that took place, at Faith @ Work Christian Church (FATWCC), I had begun working with a family

⁹ Earl O. Hutchinson, *The Disappearance of Black Leadership* (Los Angeles: Middle Passage, 2000), 20-21.

¹⁰ Robert M. Franklin, *Crisis in the Village: Restoring Hope in African-American Communities* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 132.

that came to our church through our Leaders and Scholars Afterschool Hub Program. The father in so many ways reminds me of my dad. Both alcoholics and both having been incarcerated. The mother reminds me of my mom. Both working feverishly hard to maintain a sense of normalcy for their children and to provide avenues for success. What was missing from this family is a strong foundation of faith. Though the father had grown up in church his repeated involvement with the criminal justice system has kept him from recommitting his life to one of faith. For more than two years he was able to remain on the right side of the law and made no bones about his daughter being his inspiration. This young lady became his reason for going on and he understood how critical it was for her to have him in her life. He understood that she would have a better chance at success in relationships with men, he was her primary academic support as the mother had to be the “bread winner”. The child was happy with both her parents in her life. However, the parents were unable to sustain their relationship and the father returned to a life of crime. The child is transitioning into high school at the end of this year and is no longer able to look to her dad for guidance and dotting, it’s just her mom and her now. She remains in the church’s afterschool, she is maintaining her grades and is a part of a group of girls that I mentor in my Princess to Queen Cross-Peer Circle (see Appendix F) and she excels. I believe she excels because it provides an outlet which allows her to be herself, let her hair down and simply be a child. This was quite an unwitting discovery along the journey to developing the curriculum. It, however, provided the groundwork for the implementation of curriculum at Faith @ Work Christian Church.

In considering what our role as a church would be I had to take into consideration those who would want to work within this new ministry as it is not a ministry for all to be

involved. The church's 11 year history has been one of constant leadership in areas of justice, social programs, educational support and food insecurity. Understanding that mentoring is quite a departure from even the educational undertakings as the relationship is a more personal one, in developing the curriculum I had to be deliberate in keeping the mentor—mentee relationship as the primary axis around which any other ministries would revolve.

FATWCC provided the necessary backdrop against which a pilot ministry could be developed and stand as a “Best Practice” Model for other churches to adopt if they should desire. This church is an independent Baptist church which holds fast to the traditions of Baptist doctrine. We believe that through an unwavering commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ lived daily, believers are empowered to transform their own lives as well as that of the people they encounter.

The church is located in the northeast Bronx section known as Coop City. It is a middle-income community of 60,000 residents and has more than twelve houses of worship. We are in the 45th Precinct of the NYPD which is the largest precinct in the Bronx and we border the 47th Precinct. The significance of the close proximity to the 47th Precinct is that there are vibrant rivalries between the youth in the Coop City area and what is known as “The Valley” in the 47th Precinct. Coop City has an Education Complex which includes two elementary, two middle and one high school, having several smaller schools within it. In addition, there is a stand-alone elementary and middle school in the fifth section of Coop City, known as Section 5 which also stands apart from the remaining four sections. Obviously, having so many schools there are many children and the potential rivalry, gangs and criminal behavior is heightened.

The criminal behavior can range from truancy to fights and from fights to more serious crimes. I believe that through the church's current ministries of outreach which services many of the families experiencing any level of contact with the criminal justice system (including parents) that by deliberately expanding our outreach we can make a positive impact on the lives of these specifically targeted families.

The church has a thriving afterschool and summer camp program, close ties to several of the schools and the NYPD. Through these relationships we have been able to identify several warning signs for at-risk youth. I believe that work has to start sooner than later. I chose the 10-12 age group because this is the middle school group and in some ways they have special vulnerabilities. I base this claim on academic and emotional/social development research of the life of a child in this age group. Academic research reveals that "the simple fact is that students who enter public middle schools in New York City fall behind their peers in K-8 schools, and that students with lower initial levels of academic achievement fare especially poorly in middle school."¹¹ In terms of emotional and social development they "have a strong group identity; increasingly define themselves through peers and they begin to develop and test values and beliefs that will guide present and future behaviors."¹² Emerging from a family with incarceration as a factor positions these children to be at-risk.

These children being at-risk became the issue of focus because I believe that for them to be able to proceed successfully through life the church must make bold moves to

¹¹ Jonah E. Rockoff and Benjamin B. Lockwood, "Stuck: How and Why Middle Schools Harm Student Achievement," <http://www.educationnext.org> (accessed January 23, 2017).

¹² J. Massingale, "Early Adolescence (10-12 years old) Developmental Milestones," National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning, Hunter College School of Social Work, <http://nrcpfc.org>, (accessed January 23, 2017).

bring them and their families into the presence of the Lord. The children must be allowed to come to Jesus!

Having the Education Complex complicates things for the community because children literally travel from throughout the Bronx and even the other boroughs to attend these schools. This dynamic gives rise to greater concerns for their safety. These concerns go far beyond the physical and safety implications, but also includes the biblical, historical, economic, psychological and spiritual.

When considering what's at stake biblically one must remember how King Nebuchadnezzar very intentionally captured the best and brightest that Israel had to offer in their youth (Dan 1:2-7). If we, the church, don't protect our children from those who would seek to capture them and take them off we will never know how much potential they have.

When considering what's at stake historically one must remember that for decades now, prisons and the number of prison cells needed have been calculated based upon the grades of third grade African-American boys in a few States.¹³ While this may not be the standard throughout the nation, the fact that it has ever been done is a disturbing and telling one. What is a fact is that "the system disproportionately targets youth of color and youth with disabilities. Inequities in areas such as school discipline, policing practices, high-stakes testing, wealth and healthcare distribution, school "grading" systems, and the prison-industrial complex all contribute to the [School to

¹³ Lynell Burmark, "Read or Go to Jail," January 2001, <http://infotoday.com/MMSchools/jan01?burmark.htm>(Accessed February 2, 2015).

Prison] Pipeline.”¹⁴ It is not feasible for all churches to open schools but I believe we can all agree that more can be done to disrupt the School to Prison Pipeline.

To be sure, whenever a child is at-risk he or she may also experience psychological effects. In the study, No Safe Haven II: The Effects of Violence Exposure on Urban Youth a cross-sectional study of more than 1,000 6th , 8th and 10th grade students exposed to violence documented that violence exposure was more closely related with internalizing symptoms for younger adolescents than their older counterparts.¹⁵ It is my opinion that in either case whether internalized or externalized we mustn't be dismissive of the possible affect that exposure to violence has on the healthy emotional development of youth and how our failure to address and acknowledge it, within the church, may have not only presented lasting emotional affects but spiritual as well.

If we fail to act deliberately to protect and keep our youth moving forward and growing normally then we will essentially repeat the biblical details from the book of Daniel. If we fail to plan for the success for our children we will be party to the continued institutionalized destruction of our children. This underscores the need for self-evaluation from the church which should begin with a confrontation that the church has with itself regarding its failure to be a shield around these vulnerable bright lights in the eyes of the Lord.

¹⁴ New York Civil Liberties Union, <http://www.nyclu.org/schooltoprison> (accessed February 2, 2015).

¹⁵ Mary Schwab-Stone, et.al., “No Safe Haven II: The Effects of Violence Exposure on Urban Youth,” *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 38, no. 4 (1999), doi.10.1097/00004583-199904000-00007 (accessed February 2, 2015).

Though the church bears a lot of responsibility for this vulnerable population remaining at-risk, so does the community as a whole. As a member of the African American community and clergy I consider myself to be uniquely qualified to render needed criticism. However, criticism void of solution is simply to be a “ringing gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Cor 13:1). “Black churches have a long history of managing the complexities, ambiguities, and tragedies of black family life.”¹⁶

The family has been key and central to the foundation of the black culture. Unjust laws and slavery has left an indelible imprint on the black family unlike imprints left on other groups due to injustice anywhere in the world and indeed not in the United States. From the shores of West Africa from which our ancestors were stolen, their names changed and their language eviscerated—the black family has been under attack! Through a faith that existed in Jesus Christ long before the thieves, robbers and illegitimate “owners” set foot on the continent of Africa, the black family has endured:

Even before black people could legally marry, the churches sought to foster a climate of extended kinship networks that were tolerant of the variety of black family units in the midst. The central family norm was the embrace of the mother-father parenting team. They taught a strong ethic of parental responsibility but did not embrace the paternalistic practices of their white counterparts—in part, because black women always worked outside their households, usually helping white families to remain intact and thrive. Black men understood what was necessary to sustain their own families, including tolerating the intrusion of nonfamily members for the sake of keeping a job. They also functioned as fathers and caregivers as well as disciplinarians when mother had

¹⁶ Franklin, 82.

to be away. This points to a tradition of adaptive, flexible and tolerant parenting practices that helped black families thrive against the social odds.¹⁷

Unfortunately, even having this generational commitment to family, external factors most of which are systemic and institutionalized have led to the breakdown and breakup of the black family. “The U.S. penal population of 2.2 million adults is the largest in the world. In 2012, close to 25 percent of the world’s prisoners were held in American prisons, although the United States accounts for about 5 percent of the world’s population. The U.S. rate of incarceration with nearly 1 of every 100 adults in prison or jail is 5 to 10 times higher than rates in Western Europe and other democracies.”¹⁸ “Those who are incarcerated in U.S. prisons come largely from the most disadvantaged segments of the population. They comprise mainly minority men under 40, poorly educated and often carrying additional deficits of drug and alcohol addiction, mental and physical illness and a lack of work preparation or experience.”¹⁹ Their criminal responsibility is real, but it is embedded in a context of social and economic disadvantage. More than half the prison population is black or Hispanic. “In 2010, blacks were incarcerated at six times and Hispanics at three times the rate of non-Hispanic whites. The meaning and consequences of this new reality cannot be separated from issues of social inequality and the quality of citizenship of the nation’s racial and ethnic minorities.”²⁰ The fact that blacks are incarcerated at six times the rate of others is to me a form of planned

¹⁷ Ibid., 93.

¹⁸ National Research Council, *The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2014), 1, Doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/> (accessed January 9, 2017).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 2

obsolescence. Most have never heard the term “planned obsolescence” and those who have will not immediately understand its meaning here and here’s why. Planned obsolescence is a business strategy in which the obsolescence (the process of becoming obsolete—that is, unfashionable or no longer usable) of a product is planned and built into it from its conception. This is done so that in future the consumer feels a need to purchase new products and services that the manufacturer brings out as replacements for the old ones.²¹ Blacks have always been viewed as property in this country and once slavery was no longer legal the plan shifted to another form of domination and ownership and that is through the prison industrial complex. The more blacks that were sent to prison the more families that became broken. There’s no difference in the legalized slavery of the ancestors that were once permitted and the massive incarceration that exists today.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, a changed political climate provided the context for a series of policy choices. “Across all branches and levels of government, criminal processing and sentencing expanded the use of incarceration in a number of ways: Prison time was increasingly required for lesser offenses; time served was significantly increased for violent crimes and for repeat offenders; and drug crimes particularly street dealing in urban areas became more severely policed and punished.

These changes in punishment policy were the main and proximate drivers of the growth in incarceration.”²² “In the era of high incarceration rates, prison admission and return have become commonplace in minority neighborhoods, characterized by high

²¹Tim Hindle, “Planned Obsolescence,” *The Economist*, March 23, 2009, <http://www.economist.com/node/13354332> .

²² National Research Council, 2.

levels of crime, poverty, family instability, poor health and residential segregation.”²³ As a student of the nucleus of hip hop and of the socially conscious hip hop of Tupac Shakur, I can’t help but see how this very fact mirrors the lyrics of his 1998, *That’s Just the Way It Is*. The lyrics, while inclusive of harshly spoken reality, quite vividly paint the picture of the results of institutionalized and planned destruction of a once whole people. Sharing just a portion of the lyrics because to share it all would call for the analysis to continue and find itself in so many different scenarios but it wouldn’t be a prudent exercise. Let’s examine these:

I see no changes wake up in the morning and I ask myself
Is life worth living should I blast myself?
I'm tired of bein' poor & even worse I'm black
My stomach hurts so I'm lookin' for a purse to snatch
Cops give a damn about a negro
Pull the trigger kill a nigga he's a hero
Give the crack to the kids who the hell cares
One less ugly mouth on the welfare
First ship 'em dope & let 'em deal the brothers
Give 'em guns step back watch 'em kill each other
It's time to fight back that's what Huey said
2 shots in the dark now Huey's dead
I got love for my brother but we can never go nowhere
Unless we share with each other
We gotta start makin' changes
Learn to see me as a brother instead of 2 distant strangers
And that's how it's supposed to be
How can the Devil take a brother if he's close to me?
I'd love to go back to when we played as kids, but things change and that's
just the way it is.²⁴

These lyrics speak to depth of pain we as a people have at some point felt, not understanding why we’re so bad. We’ve felt despair, targeted and when we dare step up

²³ Ibid., 5.

²⁴ Tupac Shakur, *That’s Just the Way It Is*, (1998) <http://www.metrolyrics.com/thats-just-the-wayhttp://www.metrolyrics.com/thats-just-the-way-it-is-lyrics-2pac.htmlit-is-lyrics-2pac.html>(accessed January 23, 2017).

to defend ourselves as equal human beings we're eliminated legally when no crime has been committed. We turn on each other and have become a part of the planned destruction of our own by extending the pipe of addiction from which too many never returned. We no longer see each other as kin but only as strangers...it's all too much and we have only to long for the days when were kids again.

Pausing here to interject my reality as it was not the statistically typical narrative as has just been share from both the research data and the song's lyrics. My father though an alcoholic, was not of low academic intelligence. Our family never lived in a high-crime neighborhood, we lived in both racially segregated and integrated neighborhoods and both my parents worked. What is both constant and a common denominator is our racial and ethnic group which feeds into the racial disparities inherent in policies developed around incarceration. In any event, whether a mirror-image of the typical profile of America's most incarcerated or not, the lasting affects remain the same—the breakup and breakdown of the family due to incarceration.

Because this project is chiefly concerned with the well-being of the children of the formerly incarcerated, it not only examines in-depth dynamics between the formerly incarcerated and his or her partner. However, to be consistent in making as comprehensive an analysis as possible it is judicious to share a few challenges the couple may experience while one is incarcerated and that may persist after incarceration.

There are several problems that the couple may experience that may be attributable to the incarceration factor. “Women may grow weary of time, energy and money required to maintain a relationship with an incarcerated partner.”²⁵ “Studies find

²⁵ Franklin, 263.

that while family members often view their role as one of moral and emotional support, making regular visits and phone calls and sending letters and packages to prisoners can be difficult and costly.²⁶ “Women may undergo emotional strain from not knowing what their partner is experiencing while incarcerated or from feeling socially excluded (some report feeling as if they themselves were incarcerated).”²⁷ Either partner may perceive an imbalance in the relationship often this is because men are unable to contribute as much financially while incarcerated. However, Braman finds that the perceived imbalance is not always material. “Incarceration may diminish trust between partners and augment the perception that individuals need to look out for themselves first, that others are selfish, and that relationships are exploitive.”²⁸ Moreover, Goffman finds that former prisoners and men on parole may feel the need to avoid or carefully navigate their relationships with partners who may use the criminal justice system as a way to control their behavior (e.g. a woman may threaten to call her partner’s parole officer if he continues arriving home late, becomes involved with another woman, or does not contribute enough money to the household). Again, while I do not believe that the study’s findings are indicative of my family or my parent’s relationship—they are absolutely potential threats to the overall well-being of the family.

Despite these findings it is important to note that incarceration is not always harmful to the relationship. Edin and colleagues find that while incarceration may strain the bonds between parents who are in a relationship prior to incarceration, it more often proves beneficial to couples whose relationship has been significantly hindered by

²⁶ National Research Council, 264.

²⁷ Ibid., 263.

²⁸ Ibid., 264.

lifestyle choices (almost always substance abuse) prior to incarceration.²⁹ For some of these men, incarceration serves as a turning point, a time to rehabilitate and rebuild ties with their child's mother—at least a cooperative friendship if not a romantic relationship. Because the preponderance of data identifies males as the leading group of those parents who have been incarcerated—a significant amount of the analysis focuses on the father-child relationship. It should be noted that apart from biological nuances between male and female, the experiences are very similar. My family's experience revealed a lot about my father's ability to have a relationship with us when he returned home. This was in no small part due to my mother's internal sense of the importance of restorative justice, for my father, before the phrase was ever coined.

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders. This can lead to transformation of people, relationships and communities.³⁰

The stakeholders, in our family, were my mother, fathers and my sisters and I.

According to research, “the father's relationship with his children's mother appears to play an important role in the father-child relationship during and after incarceration.”³¹ Fathers who lived with their child prior to incarceration are more likely than non-resident fathers to stay in contact with the child.³²

²⁹ Ibid., 264.

³⁰ “Communities of Restoration.” Restorative Justice. <http://restorativejustice.org/we-do/communities-of-restoration/>. (accessed January 7, 2017).

³¹ National Research Council, 268.

³² Ibid., 269.

What is perhaps the more immediate affects that incarceration has on the children is related to their age at the time of the separation. Depending on the level of support from the non-incarcerated parent, I believe that the effects academically will be less difficult the younger the child. However, “mothers and some fathers believe their children perform more poorly or have more difficulties in school following their father’s incarceration.”³³ Some studies also provide evidence of changes in children’s emotional or mental health, with children experiencing such feelings as shame or embarrassment about their father’s incarceration; emotional strain, including a belief that the father did not want to live at home; a loss of trust in the father; grief or depression or even guilt.³⁴ However, when there are more challenging dynamics within the family than just the incarceration the sentiment change.

Intermittent periods of incarceration are not always viewed as the most challenging circumstance these children face. A father’s severe substance addiction or violent behavior at home may lead some children to feel happier when their father is incarcerated. Strangely, my father was often a much better father while intoxicated and therefore we never preferred him to be incarcerated. However, I do believe that he was more difficult to live with for my mother. In any event, when one considers all of the causes and effects it becomes clearer just how detrimental to a balanced home life incarceration can be.

There are collateral effects of incarceration that extend beyond the family. There is often a considerable impact on the community as a whole. For the purpose of this

³³ Ibid., 270.

³⁴ Ibid.

project and its service aim, the emphasis is on urban communities as I believe these communities have borne the brunt of the historic increase in rates of incarceration. For instance, it is a well-known fact that the majority of those imprisoned in New York City come from five (5) primary communities. According to Aaron Marks in his *Gothamist* article entitled, “These 5 Neighborhoods Supply Over A Third of NYC’s Prisoners”, in 2012, “most prisoners’ addresses tend to be listed in the South Bronx, Brownsville, East New York, Harlem and Bed-Stuy.”³⁴

Overall, just 15 of the city’s 65 community districts account for more than half of those sent to prison over the course of the year. These communities have twice the poverty rate of the rest of the city and are more than 90 percent minority compared with less than 60 percent among the remaining areas.³⁵ (See Appendix B.)

This statistic is likely repeated throughout the nation. The conclusion drawn, in regard to incarceration’s effect on communities is that incarceration is concentrated in communities already severely disadvantaged and least capable of absorbing additional adversities.³⁶ The communities and neighborhoods with the highest rates of incarceration tend to be characterized by high rates of poverty, unemployment, and racial segregation. In particular, the geography of incarceration is contingent on race and concentrated poverty, with poor African-American communities bearing the brunt of high rates of imprisonment. The church holds the key to reversing this trend of external destruction and self-destruction.

³⁴ Aaron Marks, “These 5 Neighborhoods Supply Over a Third of NYC’s Prisoners,” *Gothamist*, May 1, 2013, http://gothamist.com/2013/05/01/these_interactive_charts_show_you_w.php (accessed January 10, 2017).

³⁵ National Research Council, 282.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Back to the Family:

According to the Urban Institute, the State of the African-American family is worse today than it was in the 1960s.³⁷ While the report also discloses that families of all ethnicities are showing a decline, the African-American household has suffered the worst decline. The following are extrapolations from the Urban Institute's report:

- In 1950, 17 percent of African-American children lived in a home with their mother but not their father. By 2010, that had increased to 50 percent.
- In 1965, only eight percent of childbirths in the Black community occurred out of wedlock. In 2010, that figure was 41 percent and today, the out of wedlock childbirth in the Black community sits at an astonishing 72 percent.
- The number of African-American women married and living with their spouse was recorded as 53 percent, in 1950. By 2010, it had dropped to 25 percent.³⁸

These statistics should be disturbing to all believers in Jesus Christ and followers of the Most High God as we generally believe that family (marriage first and then the addition of children within that marriage) is the first institution given to humanity by God. We base this claim on Genesis 2:22 which states, "Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man." In any event, whether incarceration, addiction or any number of other things are contributing factors in the decline of the Black family, it should immediately provoke a sense of urgency in the church to intervene and biblically impact the reversal of this growing trend downward.

³⁷ Gregory Acs, Kenneth Braswell, Elaine Sorensen and Margery Austin Turner, *The Moynihan Report Revisited* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2013), 18.

³⁸ Ibid.

In the 1965 groundbreaking report entitled, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action”, the late New York Senator Daniel Moynihan said, “at the heart of the deterioration of the fabric of Negro society is the deterioration of the Negro family.”³⁹ Since the Moynihan report was released, the mass incarceration of Black men has further strained the African-American Family. “By 2010, about one out of every six Black men had spent some time in prison, compared with about 1 out of 33 white men.”⁴⁰ While the original Moynihan report only made passing reference to the impact of the criminal justice system on black families—“unfortunately the role of disproportionate incarceration has increased since the 1960s. Even in the early 1970s, black men were far more likely to have been in prison than other men.”⁴¹ (See Appendix C)

The high rate of incarceration of black men profoundly affects black families and social equity. When a man is in jail or prison, he is removed from his family and community and his children miss out on the benefits of a father’s care. Further, “reentering a family and community after months or years of absence can be challenging for all concerned. Nevertheless, the remarkably high rate of incarceration of black men likely contributes to the destabilization of black families, perpetuating poverty and obstructing mobility.”⁴²

Family structure and family dynamics influence children’s development and future prospects. Michelle Alexander in “The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration In the Age of Colorblindness, notes that:

³⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 18.

The clock has been turned back on racial progress in America though scarcely anyone seems to notice. All eyes are fixed on people like Barack Obama and Oprah Winfrey, who have defied the odds and risen to power, fame and fortune. For those left behind, especially those within prison walls, the celebration of racial triumph in America must seem a tad premature. More black men are imprisoned today than at any other moment in our nation's history. More are disenfranchised today than in 1870, the year the 15th Amendment was ratified prohibiting laws that explicitly deny the right to vote on the basis of race.⁴³

Given the damning reality of the effects of incarceration on the family and the sad commentary which highlights that due to the high rate of incarceration the family, in particular the African-American family continues to deteriorate. In my experience, very little happens by chance. However, when the health and welfare of the family is approached with a sense of urgency the impact of these general statistics will begin to shift in the favor of the family and success will be its ultimate outcome.

The Forgotten Victim: The Children

Since the identified problems begin with the parents so often suggested solutions also end there. The children of the incarcerated usually receive mere cursory mentions. But the mentioning of the children of the formerly incarcerated rarely receive any attention. Speaking as one such child, I can say that the stigma of shame and embarrassment is so prevalent on a daily basis that one's goal becomes to speak about it as little as possible and go about your daily business as usual. While this helps one to survive a more deliberate approach is necessary in order to ensure that these children not only survive but that they thrive!

⁴³ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2010), 123.

Studies show that “school-age children of incarcerated parents exhibit school-related problems and problems with peer relationships.”⁴⁴ Losing a parent to prison affects multiple aspects of children’s lives and affects them to varying degrees. “Such a loss can likely have a significant impact on the emotional, psychological, developmental, and financial well-being of the child. Yet there has been little research exploring these consequences of parental incarceration. Punishment in the criminal justice system has traditionally been focused against the individual offender, with little regard to its wider effects on the offender’s family and children.”⁴⁵ The Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum’s approach is holistic but the emphasis is entirely on the child. While most resources included within the curriculum focus on the child, the “tent” also has resources for the parents.

Prior to developing the curriculum I thought that it would be important to engage in specific qualitative research around my belief that biblically there’s a mandate, to the church, to support the formerly incarcerated and that God’s hand of guidance is upon any who would develop a strong relationship with God despite their criminal justice history or status. In addition, that God provides mightily for the children of those who have been incarcerated through divine blessings. This research also includes a closer look at the ethics around the ramifications for the formerly incarcerated and their children. Looking closely at the social, political and economic impact on these families, specifically the children. Finally, a less scientific approach to the spiritual formation of these children and what might be the most effective way to promote for the formerly incarcerated parent a

⁴⁴ Jeremy Travis, Elizabeth Cincotta McBride, and Amy L. Solomon, *Families Left Behind: The Hidden Cost of Incarceration and Reentry* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2005).

⁴⁵ Brenda G. McGowan, Karen L. Blumenthal, *Why Punish the Children? A Study of Children of Women Prisoners* (Hackensack, NJ: National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1978).

“Lasting Second Chance” that is developed through worship and study designed with them and their children in mind.

The results were critical in determining what would make up the critical components of the Under the Tent Mentoring Model.

CHAPTER 4

MAY GOD BLESS YOU LIKE EPHRIAM AND MANASSEH

Much is said about prisoners in the Bible, from Joseph in Egypt and Sampson in Philistine to Paul and Silas in Phillipi. What is a common characteristic they all shared is that they were devoted to God. Another common characteristic they all shared is that upon discovering the power that had because of the relationship they had with God, they were able to overcome the obstacles of imprisonment. Perhaps the most devoted of all was Joseph as there is no biblical evidence which would suggest that even during his most difficult times of imprisonment did he ever waiver in his faith. God always provides a way for us all to find or build our faith.

Joseph:

Joseph's troubles begin at age 17 while living in the land of his father's family, Canaan. His father, Jacob, was God's special one whose name was changed to Israel. He would become the Father of the Israelites, God's chosen people. He's the favorite son of his father, though not the oldest and not the youngest—he still receives the favor of his father over all of his other brothers. This fueled an anger and hatred towards Joseph from his brothers. And as if that wasn't enough, the favor received over his brothers from his father is topped off by his father making him a special coat, a coat of many colors which further infuriated his brothers. The final nail in the coffin of hatred and jealousy came as the young, insensitive and immature Joseph has a dream and shares the details of that dream with his brothers. The Bible records the details like this:

“He said to them, “Listen to this dream I had: We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.” His brothers said to him, “Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?” And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. “Listen,” he said, “I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.”

When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, “What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?” His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind” (Gen 37:6-11).

The very thought of this fueled their hatred towards Joseph setting into motion a series of events. The brothers first plotted to kill him and then settled on selling him to a group of Ishmaelites. They slaughtered a goat and placed the special coat that their father had made for Joseph in the goat’s blood, took it to their father, lied and said Joseph was killed by a wild animal. The Ishmaelites who bought Joseph for twenty shekels (That is, about 8 ounces or about 230 grams)⁴⁶ “sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard” (Gen 37:36).

Joseph was just a child when sold into slavery but had been close to his father who walked closely with the Lord. This faith had been instilled in Joseph and despite being mistreated by his brothers and even as a result the Bible says, “The Lord was with

⁴⁶ BibleGateway, “Genesis 37 NIV,” BibleGateway, footnote b, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%2B37&version=NIV> (accessed April 04, 2017).

Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master” (Gen 39:2). Parenthetically, I believe that as believers in God we must also be keenly aware of what and how the Lord feels about us and the special blessings we receive simply because the Lord is with us. If we don’t know as it turns out others around us will see and come to desire the favor of God on our lives be shared with them in some way. This can be both a blessing and curse at the same time. In Joseph’s case it eventually lands him in jail. The Bible goes on to prove this point by saying:

“When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, 7 and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he refused. “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God? “And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, 1 she called her household servants. “Look,” she said to them, “this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. Then she told him this story: “That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger.

Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison, the

Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did" (Gen 39: 3-23).

I don't believe that Joseph's story is necessarily typical to many who are imprisoned. Joseph was an innocent man and many are not. However, Joseph had something in his faith that is available to all whether innocent or guilty—he had the favor of God on his life. The New Testament assures us of Jesus' call not only to those considered righteous by man but also to the prisoner. The Gospel According to Luke boldly lays out the call of Jesus here saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free" (Lk 4:18).

Joseph fared well while in prison because not only did he know that the hand of the Lord was on him but so did those around him. Even though things seemed to go well for him while in prison he still desired his freedom. God didn't create us to live in bondage but in the full liberty that comes from knowing God.

What challenges face those who are restored to freedom in maintaining their newly committed lives in God?

Philosophically, we can all agree, perhaps, that life is about choices. There is more than one way to respond to adversity. I can only imagine what my father and all those who've ever been incarcerated must have experienced when being released from prison. There may have been high hopes for success this time and there may have been overwhelming feelings of despair both of which can cause one to move away from the relationship that has been developed in faith. How closely one walks to God upon release

may have as much to do with how their time is spent while inside. Many prisoners have often been told to “do the time, don’t let the time do you.” This basically translates into not allowing the circumstances to change you for the worse. “Refusing to be crushed by his circumstances, Joseph did his best in prison and gained the confidence of his jailers. Joseph had the wisdom to make the best of bad circumstances. Instead of stewing over his situation, he worked hard to become a reliable trustee. Like many people he suffered disappointment when his hope for release was raised and dashed. In the end, his virtue and innocence were rewarded.”⁴⁷

The reward was this:

“So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt” (Gen 41:41-43).

Yes, Joseph’s ascension to the top of the Egyptian government is more of an outlier than the average formerly incarcerated individual. However, what remained a consistent element in Joseph’s life was the hand of God being on him and that favor being recognized by not only Joseph but by those around him. Every single person who has ever been imprisoned needs the people around them to believe that they can be better than their circumstances dictates. Adversity is a part of life that escapes none of us but it is definitely how we respond that gives us the ability to remain stagnant, go backwards or to go forward. Malcolm X said, “There is no better than adversity. Every defeat, every heartbreak, every loss, contains its own seed, its own lesson on how to improve your

⁴⁷ Dan Graves, “Joseph Is Refined in Prison,” *Captive Faith*, <http://www.captivefaith.org/bible/joseph.php>. (accessed January 10, 2016).

performance next time.”⁴⁸ I believe that by embracing the formerly incarcerated upon their return not only will they improve their performance at life but that the blessings will fall to their children. Such was the case with Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Manasseh and Ephraim are the prototype for the lives every child of the formerly incarcerated can have if the proper love and concern is taken with their lives. Like their father, Joseph, their remarkable lives are due in no small part to their upbringing. Joseph did not emerge from prison with bitterness in his heart but rather with a heart of praise, thanksgiving and forgiveness. The three Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—all boast proudly of Joseph’s remarkable life. The character of Joseph presents as one who though treated unfairly and on many occasions his very faith could have been shaken and indeed broken—yet he held on. Mark S. Bernstein in, “Stories of Joseph: Narratives Migration between Judaism and Islam” states that the character of Joseph is the locus of significant cross-cultural exchange perhaps should In his article, “Joseph From Prison to Prominence”, Roland Clarke says, “according to the Qu’ran, the account of Joseph’s life is the most beautiful of stories”(Surah 12:3).⁴⁹

Indeed Joseph’s is a beautiful story which doesn’t end with his ascension to the highest level in Egypt. In many ways, his reentry into society is where new life began. He took a wife and had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim who would both be honored not by their father but by their grandfather. Earlier we recounted how Joseph ended up in prison. His brothers who were older and jealous of the favor their father showed towards Joseph sold him into captivity. This was an area that God needed for Joseph to reconcile so that

⁴⁸ “A quote by Malcolm X,” *Goodreads*, <http://goodreads.com/quotes/249035-there-is-no-better-than-adversity-every-defeat-every-heartbreak> (accessed January 28, 2017).

⁴⁹ Ronald Clarke, “Joseph: From Prison to Prominence,” *Answering Islam*, <http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/joseph.html>. (accessed January 13, 2017).

not only he could be blessed but also so that the blessings would be passed down to his offspring. The time had come for biblical restorative justice with a twist. Though Joseph was the ex-offender it was his brothers who needed to be restored for their acts of sin and crime against their innocent brother. Joseph a brother who was wrongfully imprisoned for 14 years would be the one to ensure that the reconciliation took place so that the blessings could continue to flow. The Bible records the following:

Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me.” When they had done so, he said, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance (Gen 45:4-6).

The parent who is the formerly incarcerated has to see themselves as God sees them—as vessels for God’s use. Joseph realized that his suffering was not in vain and that his vindication came through his faith in God to not only free him but in God’s ability to sustain that same freedom. This can only be accomplished through acts of humility, reconciliation and love.

Joseph realized that not only did God do this so that his family might live, he also realized that it was God who sent him to prison and not his brothers (Gen 45:8). The one who is to be a follower of God must realize that in no part of one’s life is not God’s hand. Joseph now wanted to make the restoration complete by sending for his father. He instructed his brothers to go back and bring their father to him. The biblical narrative says:

So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. They told him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt.” Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them. But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph

had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. And Israel said, “I’m convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die (Gen 45:25-28).

By sending for Jacob and having him come, the full restoration could be achieved and not only restoration but divine blessings. What I see as a unspecified atonement for decades of forced separation from him is the resulting blessing for his children. The Bible records the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh as:

Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.’ Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers (Gen 48: 3-6).

When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, “Who are these?” They are the sons God has given me here,” Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.” Then Joseph removed them from Israel’s knees and bowed down with his face to the ground. 13 And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel’s left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them close to him. 14 But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm—may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on the earth.” When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim’s head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father’s hand to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. Joseph said to him, “No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.” He blessed them that day and said, “In your[c] name will Israel pronounce this blessing:

“May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh” (Gen 48: 8-9, 1220).

One of the most cherished and enduring biblical stories, shared between three major world faiths gives not only the one who was formerly incarcerated but his and her children a divine blessing. I remain convinced that my daddy never returned to the penitentiary because without being able to articulate it—he knew that the hand of God was on his life, he knew that my mama was the key to the stability of the family and that because of her dedication and commitment to our well-being he was able to develop a closer walk with Jesus. More than my conviction that my mother, my sisters and I were the catalyst for keeping my father's faith moving forward, is my conviction that God then and even now has given us the Ephraim and Manasseh blessing. God used my mother to be the constant cheerleader, facilitator, mentor and parent to their four daughters who have all and are all preparing the next generation to receive the same blessing. It is out of the revelation and acceptance that I am heir to the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh that my commitment to other children of the formerly incarcerated and my desire to train other believers to be a part of the ever unfolding blessing.

CHAPTER 5 JUSTICE FOR ALL

“The ends you serve that are selfish will take you no further than yourself but the ends you serve that are for all, in common, will take you into eternity.” ~Marcus Garvey

So many formerly incarcerated people have difficulty fully reintegrating into their homes, communities and the general population. Many are eager to get their lives back together and make a clean start and look forward to never returning to prison again. Well if these things are true and data shows that this all becomes a challenge for them and their families—one must ask, “What role does politics play in creating an environment for the successful reintegration providing alternatives to re-incarceration and that would prevent their children from ever becoming involved in the criminal justice system or is the political climate one which reinforces criminal involvement?”

I approached answering these questions with thoughtfulness and am relying heavily on data that has been well studied rather than the evidence that stares glaringly into my eyes when I see those who are trying to take advantage of their second chance only to be broken. This brokenness affects the children in ways that most don’t know.

The focus of most research has largely been on the returning citizen but it’s their children who are most at-risk of repeating the pattern of their parents and to that end very intentional efforts must be made by the church and those who love these children to guarantee that they do not become statistics. In order to be effective we must consider empirical evidence that suggest the origins of the problems and develop corresponding

solutions to change the results. I have carefully selected what follows in developing the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum and believe that a strong instrument materializes.

“A sentence of imprisonment constitutes only a deprivation of the basic right to liberty”, according to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime.⁵⁰ This sentiment will most likely be rejected more often than it is accepted simply because we are a society of law and order. However, if we think critically about what is really behind the assertion we will begin to understand that to imprison another human being is to treat them as if they are animals. In fact, many animals are never put in cages the only ones placed in cages are those that humans want to control. Like animal poaching caged submission of humans is akin.

“The growth of the penal system and high rates of incarceration did not occur by accident...they resulted from a series of policy decisions that were intended to increase the severity of sanctions.”⁵¹ Before World War II, the making, implementation, and enforcement of criminal justice policy in the United States were almost exclusively within the purview of the States or local authorities, not the federal government.⁵² To a degree, unparalleled in U.S. history, politicians and public officials beginning in the 1960s regularly deployed criminal justice legislation and policies for expressive political purposes as they made “street crime”—both real and imagined—a major national, state and local issue.”⁵³ Failure to link the rise in incarceration to greater racial justice in this

⁵⁰ Lulia Lazar, “Prison Reform and Alternatives to Imprisonment,” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/prison-reform-and-alternatives-to-imprisonment.html> (accessed January 13, 2017).

⁵¹ National Research Council, 104.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

country would be a huge mistake. It has become a political backlash against the pursuit of civil rights and has whether planned or by chance had a devastating effect on the black family.

There's a long history in the United States of debates over criminal justice policy, often in relation to the issues of race and civil rights. To many African-American and Mexican-Americans, dramatic, often violent confrontations in the years immediately after World War II illustrated serious problems of bias on the part of police forces. These confrontations included the lynching of black veterans returning home to the south after World War II; the numerous clashes between long-time white residents and new black and other migrants in U.S. cities, notably the infamous "Zoot Suit Riots" in Los Angeles, in 1942, and the 1943 race riot in Detroit and rising urban-suburban tensions with the rapid expansion of suburbia after the war.⁵⁴

The response to these occurrences was two-fold:

"Many demanded that more attention be paid to episodes of police brutality as well as to police inaction in the face of organized and wide-scale white violence; and Whites in the south and increasingly in the north also demanded that greater attention be paid to problems of crime and disorder."⁵⁵

Empirical data clearly points to the connection between the government's role in criminalizing the minority community which has had a devastating negative impact on the family as many more parents have been separated from their children due to incarceration. Frankly, the lasting effects of the laws and policies that have become as much a part of the fabric of our society as is the eagle have been extremely demoralizing and detrimental.

Believers in God and Followers of Jesus Christ are compelled to not only seek justice through the flawed systems of humanity but instead be led by biblical principles of

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

divine justice. For those disenfranchised by harsh and targeted laws of punishment whose families become as much victims as the often non-human victims (property) they've offended—there must be a sound examination of the Jubilee Model of Justice and Restoration. The examination must focus its attention on the consideration of whether or not barriers to successful alternatives and reentry can be achieved through a form of implementation.

The year of Jubilee has its origins in the Old Testament book of Leviticus, chapter 25 verses 8-10 which reads:

Count off seven sabbath years—seven times seven years—so that the seven sabbath years amount to a period of forty-nine years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan” (Lev. 25:8-10).

“Within the context of the Torah, the primary purpose of Leviticus itself seemed to be to teach the priests and people the implications of God’s holiness, specifically in terms of how the people of Israel were expected to respond. This expected response was a lifestyle different than anything anyone in the receiving audience had experienced to that point, and the year of Jubilee was just one aspect of it.”⁵⁶

Jubilee is often associated with the concept of debt cancellation. However, in the United States the biblical year of Jubilee has long been associated with issues of social justice. During the nineteenth century the focus was on slavery as reflected by a number of Civil War era songs. This seemed to be a very logical connection since one of the

⁵⁶ Michael A. Harbin, “Jubilee and Social Justice,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (December 2011): 686, http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/54/54-4/JETS_54-4_685-699_Harbin.pdf (accessed January 9, 2017).

parameters of the year of Jubilee was the directive to “proclaim a release through the land for all inhabitants (Lev 25:10) a phrase understood by many abolitionists referring to the freeing of slaves. More recently, the subsequent phrase in the Leviticus passage for each of you to return to “his own property in the year of Jubilee has been used as an argument for “redistribution of wealth.”⁵⁷ Both these interpretations may be controversial but the Jubilee concept can indeed be applied to Restorative Justice.

Michael A. Harbin makes three clarifying points about Jubilee that we should be careful not to miss or they get lost in the controversies. Those are that, “Jubilee was designed to periodically reset the nation at a God-delineated socio-economic baseline. The baseline was the family possession of the land promised by God to Abraham and his descendants throughout Genesis, which was actually distributed in the book of Joshua.”⁵⁸

And second, “the year of Jubilee is a culturally specific demonstration of the character of God. The author refers to Ronald J. Sider’s pronouncement that, “it is principles not details that are important today...God wants society’s pool of productivity assets to be distributed so that everyone has the resources to earn his or her own way.”⁵⁹ Finally, “the Jubilee Principle is valid only in a society that collectively recognizes God as sovereign.”⁶⁰ Herein resides the answer to our question, Can the Jubilee Model be applied to Restorative Justice to arrive at success?

As a product of a family torn apart due to alcoholism and crime and also as a witness to the unwitting restorative acts of my mother towards my father. The second

⁵⁷ Ibid., 685.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 696.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

chance that my father received in society through employment opportunities, sobriety programs (Alcoholics Anonymous), family support (Al-Anon for mom and daughters), academic support, positive role models and consistent recreational and extracurricular opportunities—I find that this is a viable solution.

If applied properly towards those who have violated the law and subsequently torn their families apart—this principle can go far to undo the ongoing status of “other” when trying to reenter our economic system and move from lack to prosperity holistically. As discussed previously, the high rate of crime and punishment can be directly linked to intentionally planned obsolescence of the male in the African-American home and subsequently creates an environment which makes it increasingly more difficult for the children of those formerly incarcerated to attain the same success as their peers.

There must be a collective approach to the application of such a model if it is to be successful. That would call for the church and other faith-based organizations and governmental partnerships whether formal or informal, community outreach and collaborations, victim involvement and finally the family and the formerly incarcerated. To be sure, this will look differently in each State, city and town but with deliberate intent it can be accomplished.

CHAPTER 6

BUT AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE WE WILL SERVE THE LORD

Though I was very young when my father returned home, I can remember him coming back with a small travel bag having in it a few clothing items, toiletries and this really big orange covered Bible. The Word of God had sustained him through his imprisonment and he didn't forget the Lord when he received his freedom—he brought the Lord home with him. I honestly don't remember my father ever quoting Scripture but when I think about him and the many others who return home, I often imagine this particular scripture giving them all hope:

“Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, “The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.” The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord” (Lam 3:22-26).

It is texts such as this that can make the difference in these unique families staying plugged into God. The church has to be intentional in its outreach to these families and not seek to regurgitate the same formatted worship experience that has been and remains sufficient and acceptable to those whose faith is may either be at a level that's too high that they would be missed as new additions or whose faith may be too weak that they would feel unwelcomed. The church must begin with the very same objective as it has for everyone it ministers to and that is to, “Go into all the world and

preach the gospel to all creation” (Mk 16:15). The church is to remain vigilant in its efforts to provide sound biblical teaching and worship which focuses on gratitude to God and it must have a great emphasis on prayer to reinforce or strengthen the spiritual formation of this newly reunited family and those who may be new to the Christian faith.

“This is clearly a day calling for new wineskins. The old wineskins may last for generations, but they will no longer be on the cutting edge of the expansion of the kingdom of God. The new wine of the Holy Spirit requires reengineered vessels.”⁶¹ This is a clear indication that this vulnerable family structure need not conform to the traditional worship experience within the church but that the paradigm shift must begin in the church. Yes, we gather for corporate worship but that gathering must no longer “require” an expected attire. Yes, we must praise but that praise must not be either highly-exuberant or low-energy. On the contrary, there must be a consciousness about the cultural influences which may already be largely influential in the lives of these family members, in particular the children. Yes, we must pray but prayer shouldn’t be expected to be verbose nor should it necessarily be, “Jesus wept” but rather it should be meaningful and with broken English, busted verbs and full of grammatical errors if and only if they are spoken from the hearts of those desperately in search of and in need of a continual flow of the anointing of the Lord. If we are to accomplish an effective witness to these families we must be willing to do something that we, the Church, has never done—change! If we approach our calling, our outreach and desire to be shepherds over the lives of those considered to be on the cusp of sustainable forward progress then

⁶¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Churchquake: How the New Apostolic Reformation is Shaking Up the Church as we Know It* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1999), 33.

changing will not be entered into with fear but will be embraced with an attitude towards salvation through a faithful second chance.

I remember when in 2016 I proposed to the church starting a second worship service and how I received a swift backlash. Don't forget that I pastor a church that my husband and I started. Yet, as churches are the people have a voice and I was told that the time wasn't right and so I didn't expand to the second service. When I reflect backwards I now see God's guidance at that point and perhaps it was more about God showing me who would be with me and who wouldn't than it was about the people not being faithful. In any event, I now feel a sense of urgency that will not be restricted by "naysayers as my creativity has been released by the Lord to move forward.

"When individual leaders have freedom from permission withholders, they can be as creative as God wants them to be. They can take risks. They can make mistakes.

They can explore new territory. They can shake up the status quo."⁶² I am humbled by the congregation that God has given me to lead and pastor but I have no delusions about the level of love some members have and the lack thereof. These families spiritual needs cannot be sustained in the current worship environment. The congregation is an older and more traditional membership and because the emphasis is on serving children ages 10-12 years old the culture into which have been born would probably stir feelings of alienation. To this end, we will definitely move to a second worship and at this point it will provide the option of a Biblical Sabbath Day One-Hour of Power format.

Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10). This worship experience has to be

⁶² Ibid., 77.

full of life! It has to reinforce in the lives of God's people the idea that our relationship with God is connected to the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. My husband has an expression, "Everybody in, nobody out" and that will always be a cornerstone of our worship but because the outreach is focused it will be to them first and all others will come and the worship will grow organically. Rick Warren says that he doesn't stress church growth. He stresses church life, and it happens. Here is how he views it:

"All living things grow—you don't have to make them grow. It's the natural thing for living organisms to do if they are healthy. For example, I don't have to command my three children to grow. They naturally grow. In the same way, since the church is a living organism, it is natural for it to grow if it is healthy. The church is a body not a business. It is an organism, not an organization. It is alive. If a church is not growing, it is dying."⁶³

While growth is not the focus of this added worship service I believe growth will be organic as the families will immediately realize that this is a space for grace designed with them in mind. It is my sincere belief that no sustainable success can be achieved apart from a strong relationship with Jesus Christ and it is this belief that will bind my traditional worship congregants with the congregants of this second service.

⁶³ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Every Church is Big In God's Eyes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995): 16.

CHAPTER 7
“WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? CHAOS OR COMMUNITY”:
UNDER THE TENT MENTORING MODEL

In an act of homage, I have named this chapter after the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s last book entitled, “Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?” It is a book that has had a profound effect on my life and speaks to the sense of urgency I feel to reach back for those whose lives have mirrored my own. Dr. King himself was formerly incarcerated and therefore his children and I have the same reflective image. We have all been recipients of the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh. It is now time to give back.

The model and curriculum was developed using the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, published by Mentoring.org, as a guide. I believe that throughout I have made my commitment and passion very clear but I thought that it was very important that I not reinvent the wheel but incorporate the expertise of those who have been studying best practices and who have in many cases done the work themselves. To effectively train others on the Under the Tent Curriculum and its implementation, I designed it using five of the six standards presented by Mentoring.org. In addition, to utilizing five of the standards I also used the planning, monitoring and budgeting planning tools. The following is the format that the Under the Tent Mentoring Model Training took:

1. Recruitment: “Recruit appropriate mentors and mentees by realistically describing the program’s aim and expected outcomes.”⁶⁴

I recruited potential mentors from within my church and through community partnerships and outreach. On September 17, 2016, 7 members of my church attended a 1-Day Curriculum Training. Prior to the beginning of the training each participant was given a Pre-Assessment (See Appendix D). The purpose of the Pre-Assessment was to ascertain their willingness to mentor and whether they personally knew anyone who has ever been or is incarcerated. They were then given a one hour Introduction which includes the definition of a mentor. Included in the introduction is a “How Did We Get Here?” overview from a personal retelling and biblical mandate to insist upon justice for the least of these and the activation of a call to action such as the one given by Dr. King in the book:

“Let us be dissatisfied until America will no longer have high blood pressure of creeds and an anemia of deeds. Let us be dissatisfied until the tragic walls that separate the outer city of wealth and comfort from the inner city of poverty and despair shall be crushed by the battering rams of the fires of justice. Let us be dissatisfied until they who live on the outskirts of Hope are brought into the metropolis of daily security.”⁶⁵

It was made clear that our target outreach would be to children ages 10-12 years old whose parents are formerly incarcerated. I believe this was important so that all participants would know at the beginning that this is not a generic mentoring program. I then presented the research as it relates biblically, politically, economically, socially and

⁶⁴ National Mentoring Partnership, *Elements of Effective Practices for Mentoring*, 4th Edition (Boston: National Mentoring Partnership, 2015).

⁶⁵ Martin, L. King Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 245.

spiritually. The training included a discussion about what is expected of an adult mentor. This was important so that in terms of time, resources, dedication and commitment they would have every opportunity to decide whether or not they are properly suited to be a mentor. In addition, two of the attendees were under the age of 18 and were a critical part of the model's Cross Age Peer Mentoring Module. The Under the Tent Model followed the Mentoring.org standard in as far as clarity of purpose was key to the process. We are still in the process of shoring up this standard by creating a written recruitment plan that includes all of the policies and procedures used to implement the Benchmark practices (and relevant Enhancement practices) included in the Recruitment Standard. (See Appendix E.) I must admit that my recruitment efforts didn't meet their standards because I had a built-in pool of people from which to recruit, the church. One of the Pre-Assessment Questions asked, "Why do you want to be a mentor?" and 1 person out of 7 answered, "Because my pastor asked." While this individual may be willing, it remains a question how well-suited for mentoring is this individual?

The Standard for Recruitment suggests that "adults need to see an ad for an organization, or program on a regular schedule and multiple times before they make the decision to mentor."⁶⁶ I advertised in the church and minimally in the greater community for three-weeks.

Screening: "Screen prospective mentors to determine whether they have the time, commitment, and personal qualities to be safe and effective mentors."⁶⁷ I did not include a screening component for the mentees here as the target population is clearly defined

⁶⁶ National Mentoring Partnership, 17.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 24.

and I have specific organizations and entities from which to recruit the mentees. This day of training focused on preparing these seven (7) volunteers to mentor. However, it will be included in the final curriculum to provide guidance to other churches and organizations. Background checks are an essential element of the screening process. As Faith @ Work Christian Church has an existing afterschool program which already utilizes the New York State Central Registry background check, we have added the finger-print based FBI criminal background check and home visits to potential mentors homes. I view this as a critical element of the screening process as there's a high probability that at some point in the mentor-mentee relationship the mentee may have an occasion to interact with family members of their mentor. Because this mentoring model also includes a cross-age peer module, I did not seek to meet the screening standard enhancement of prioritizing mentors who are older than college age. However, 5 out of 7 of my recruits were beyond college age. "Mentoring programs should have a written screening plan that includes all of the policies and procedures used to implement the Benchmark practices (and relevant Enhancement practices) included in the Recruitment Standard. (See Appendix E)

Training: "Train prospective mentors in the basic knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to build an effective and safe mentoring relationships using culturally appropriate language and tools."⁶⁸ The Under the Tent Training day was primarily given to defining common terms and an in depth Cross-Age Peer Mentoring Module. "In Cross-Age mentoring there should be two or more grades/years separating mentor and mentee."⁶⁹ The Under the Tent Model has both a male and female component, "One Up/One Down

⁶⁸ Ibid., 34.

⁶⁹ Michael J. Karcher, "Cross-Age Peer Mentoring," <http://www.michaelkarcher.com>, (accessed January 23, 2017).

(Male), and the “Princess to Queen” (Female) Modules—they are both overseen by an adult moderator. The trainees received a full overview and presentation by the two youth present. (See Appendix F.) Church and Community: Collaboration with Healing Communities Module. The participants were presented with a workshop led by Dr. Harold Dean Trulear who made clear the importance of the church’s role in connecting the formerly incarcerated and his/her family to the church in order for full restoration, reinforcement of the spiritual necessity and to further ensure the sustainability of the family. (See Appendix G.)

Cultural Bridging—Cultural Interdependency, presented by Minister Tandra Birkett. Minister Birkett based her presentation of a Frederick Douglass’ assertion that, “The elevation of our race is wholly dependent on our exertions.” This module was critical to the training in that it clearly defines the relationship style of this curriculum. The standard advises that, “mentoring programs need to clearly address the relationship orientation of their program in both pre-and-post match mentor training.”⁷⁰ Because “children of incarcerated parents struggle with issues of trust and social stigma”⁷¹—it was important that we stress and emphasize building trust and being consistent with follow through if the mentor plans something with the child. If we begin to see our own survival as connected the survival of the mentee the model’s effectiveness will be that much greater.

Implementation/Monitoring and Support: I incorporated the Mentoring.org Elements of Program Planning and Management through a workshop presented by, Mr.

⁷⁰ National Mentoring Partnership, 42.

⁷¹ Ibid.

David Aviles, Real Estate and Economic Development Strategist. The workshop emphasized developing a clearly defined Mission and Vision Statement. “It should describe why the program exists and the meaningful change it hopes to produce at the participant and/or community level.”⁷² We introduced a more sophisticated concept known as a Theory of Change (ToC). A ToC should explain how mentoring services and the activities that mentors and mentees engage in, will result in the desired outcome. Key to the Planning was the process of development of resources. My approach was to begin with known community resources rather than national ones as there’s an assumption that because a relationship already exists, engagement in terms of agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be easier to obtain.

Program Budget: “The mentoring program should have a written budget for the current fiscal year and beyond.”⁷³ As these are expected to be programs or ministries within the church—budget considerations will most likely be developed within the overall budget process of the church. However, it is emphasized that this program should not be overshadowed by current youth programs within the church.

Evaluation Plan: Finally, we ended with a need to consider, during the development process, how the program will evaluate its effectiveness. “The evaluation plan is, in many ways, the companion document to the ToC and the logic model; it specifies what the program will measure to determine that the program is being implemented with fidelity and that it is achieving its stated goals for participants and the

⁷² Ibid., 77.

⁷³ Ibid.

community.”⁷⁴ Because in most cases the mentoring program will be considered embedded within the church’s overall programs, “it is critical that the Evaluation Plan offer some strategy for determining the mentoring services’ contribution to the overall program outcomes, so that the “value added” if mentoring can be captured and articulated.”⁷⁵ This is so critical because this model relies primarily on the mentor-mentee relationship. When the bond of trust is gained the mentor will be in a position to positively impact the mentee in such a way as to strengthen or lead the mentee to a relationship of reliance and trust in Jesus Christ, academic deficiencies if they exist can begin to be reduced or eliminated, cultural sensitivity and awareness can be quite deliberate, recreation, positive peer relationships and the personal goals of the mentee can be articulated and met. The next chapter will further expound upon the Evaluation Process.

All of these standards of achievement can be met Under the Tent.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 78

⁷⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 8

HOW EFFECTIVE IS ELI IN PREPARING SAMUEL?

The mentor-mentee relationship is the foundation of any mentoring program. It exists to guarantee that the agreed upon goals are met. The mentor is the one entrusted with preparing the mentee for ultimate success. I see the mentor as a modern day Eli. Eli was the priest entrusted with preparing the boy Samuel for “his whole life [to be] given over to the LORD.” (1 Sam 1: 28) If the goal was to prepare Samuel to be a servant of the LORD, then his success must be measured by Eli’s ability to properly prepare him. Under the Tent had three primary methods of evaluation. Those three were an in-depth pre-commitment interview/pre-assessment, a commitment agreement and an in-depth post-commitment interview/post-assessment. As is so often the case, with youth programming, I had not included tools to evaluate feedback from the mentee, parents and other stakeholders (i.e. school and afterschool staff, etc.)

However, as I further engaged in research I realized that my initial approach would not be sufficient in evaluating the success and effectiveness of the curriculum. I realized that there must be a more comprehensive approach to evaluating how well the mentor did as evidenced by the mentee’s demonstration of value added as a result of the mentoring relationship.

As a result of the relationship Samuel had with Eli, the Bible says he ministered before the LORD (1 Sa 2:18); he grew up in the presence of the LORD (1 Sa 2:21) and that he grew in stature and favor with the LORD and with the people (1 Sa 2:26). The

Bible goes on to say that, “The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground.” (1 Sa 3:19) Despite Eli’s personal issues he took seriously his call to prepare Samuel for the work of the Lord and because he did, Samuel was able to thrive. All mentors should have the success of their mentee as their core value. Church or faith-based programs should have the same expectations for its mentors as do non-faith-based organizations.

According to Dr. Alfonso Wyatt, in *Mentoring from the Inside Out*, “one of the weaknesses of many youth programs in the church is an absence of evaluation tools.”⁷⁶ In his book he goes on to introduce the Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets instrument which identifies what “all young people need in order to grow and thrive.”⁷⁷ “The 40 Developmental Assets can offer a mentoring inventory checklist as well as a mentor diagnostic assessment tool.”⁸⁰ In addition, to the 40 Developmental Assets, Dr. Wyatt shares the “Mentor’s Spiritual Reflection that lists The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Fathers.”⁷⁸ I find these to be essential tools of evaluation as we seek to recruit and develop male mentors. Finally, I consulted and incorporated Drs. John Harris and Michael Nakkula’s “Match Questionnaire (MCQ) and the Youth Mentoring Survey (YMS)”⁷⁹ as additional tools of evaluation.

⁷⁶ Alfonso Wyatt, *Mentoring from the Inside Out* (New York: True Perspective Publishing House, 2012), 74.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 73.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 74.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 81.

⁷⁹ “Expert and Affordable Mentoring Evaluation,” <http://www.mentoringevaluation.com> (accessed January 23, 2017).

I sought to integrate evaluation tools that would not be overwhelming and intimidating to potential mentors. Understanding that many of the recruited and screened mentors will likely be less sophisticated than those who are paid as professional youth workers/mentors I purposely selected instruments that do not present as too daunting, benign and analytical. Instead, these selected instruments will go far to remind them of the “Eli” mantle with which they have chosen to carry.

The Search Institute offers multiple 40 Developmental Assets instruments. The one most appropriate for this process is the one designed for the 8-12 year old group, 40 Developmental Assets for the Middle Childhood.⁸⁰ They are divided into two (2) primary categories, External Assets and Internal Assets, and they are as follows:

External Assets:

- Support: Which includes Family Support, Positive Family
- Communication, other adult relationships, caring neighborhoods, caring school climate and parent involvement in schooling. (1-6)
- Empowerment: Which includes Communities which values youth, children as resources, service to others and safety. (7-10)
- Boundaries/Expectation: Which includes Family boundaries, School boundaries, Neighborhood boundaries, Adult Role Models, Positive Peer
- Influence and High Expectations. (11-16)
- Constructive Use of Time: Which includes Creative Activities, Child
- Programs, Religious Communication and Time at Home. (17-20)

Internal Assets:

- Commitment to Learning: Which includes Achievement Motivation, Learning Engagement, Homework, Bonding to School and Reading for Pleasure. (21-25)

⁸⁰ “Developmental Assets,” <http://www.search-institute.org> (accessed January 23, 2017).

- Positive Values: Which includes Caring, Equality and Social Justice, Integrity, Honesty, Responsibility and Healthy Lifestyle. (26-31)
- Social Competencies: Which includes Planning and Decision Making, Interpersonal Competencies, Cultural Competencies, Resistance Skills and Peaceful Conflict Resolution. (32-37)
- Positive Identity: Which includes Personal Power, Self-esteem, Sense of Purpose and Positive View of Personal Future. (38-40)⁸¹

Dr. Wyatt is careful to note that, “the 40 Developmental Assets should not be seen as a “magic bullet” or panacea. What it can be is a piece of vital research that can change the life and trajectory of a young person.”⁸² I found this to be a vital part of presenting instruments for use in the evaluation process. “The successful mentor will find ways to involve as many positive asset-builders as possible.”⁸³

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Fathers:

The Under the Tent Mentoring Model is designed to serve both male and female. However, due to the institutionalization of black men at greater rates than women I felt it was important to include additional resources for training and evaluating male mentors. It serves as an enhancement and empowerment tool to not only recognize the selfless commitment that men have to helping another male achieve but also the often additional support needed by those same men. By introducing Dr. Wyatt’s Seven Habits of Highly Effective Fathers, to the evaluation process, I believe that even greater success will mark the relationship between the mentor and mentee. Those seven habits (paraphrased) are as follows:

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Wyatt, 80.

⁸³ Ibid.

1. Let Your Presence be Your Present. How can you strive to be in God's presence, yet refuse to be in your child's presence? Do something with your family on a regular basis and I don't mean just going to church.
2. Let Your Word be Your Bond. If you say it then do it. If you promised something then carry it out. Young people are learning about life from you. What are they seeing? What are they hearing? What are they feeling? Your word must mean something. Fathers cannot afford to be tuned out because one day you will have to say something important, something that could save your child's life and you want to be believed, heard and respected.
3. Fight the Real Family Enemy. The enemy is not your spouse. The enemy is not your children. The real enemy seeks to kill, rob and destroy you and your family. The enemy you should be fighting is low self-esteem, low aspirations, drugs, depression, crime, gangs, low or non-functioning schools (prison is the graduate school of failing schools). Know that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.
4. Be a Giver and Not a Taker. A father that is selfish and cannot see beyond his own needs or satisfying his own wants should relinquish the title of father.
5. Please Watch Your Step. It is a fact that one step can take you closer to God or closer to the enemy and your whole family will be impacted depending on your choice. So you must watch where you are stepping. That means no sidestepping your responsibilities even when circumstances are tough. No stepping in and out of the church depending on your mood, who is preaching or according to any other "man" idiosyncrasies only deciphered by you. No stepping out with other women in or out of the church. Strive to step toward the light, not alone mind you, but leading your whole family.
6. Have a Vision for You and Your Family. What do you want for your family? What is it that you are willing to sacrifice your all to attain? Too many fathers have grown content chasing dreams but never make time or worse, see the need to develop a vision for themselves or family. What is your operating vision that takes you and your family to the desired next level? Remember having a vision is nice but working hard to make the vision come true is the best.
7. Pray, Praise and Worship God at Home. Do you praise the Lord at home with your family? Has your child, your spouse, other family members seen you caught up in the Spirit in your living room or den? Do you pray with your children (not just for your children)? Some men may say no to some or all of these questions. Perhaps their father never prayed with them. If so, YOU can start anew. Fathers, you do not have to be a hostage to the past. You can do a new thing that benefits you as a man of God and benefit your family. Men it is ALRIGHT to pray, praise and worship the Lord in your home.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Ibid., 81-84.

These are all important developmental tools for the mentor to develop so that when it's time to evaluate the effectiveness of the individual's mentoring it can be checked against how the mentor and lead at home.

Match Characteristic Questionnaire:

“The Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ) is the most comprehensive measure of match relationship quality (MRQ) available with published validity evidence.

It is completed by matched mentors and typically takes 10-15 to administer.”⁸⁵

(See Appendix I.) The questionnaire is divided into three (3) sections:

1. Section I: How do you feel about your match? This section consists of a series of 22 questions that requires that the mentor choose between the range of 1-6, 1 representing “Never” and 6 representing “Always”. The remaining responses are, 2-“Rarely”, 3-“Often”, 4-“Pretty Often” and 5-“Very Often”.

2. Section II: What do you focus on in your match? This section has two (2) parts. Part I asks what are, “Your Three Most Important Focuses as a Mentor”? They are then asked to rank them in order of importance with one being the most important. Part II is a series of twenty (20) questions that requires each mentor to choose between the ranges of 1-6. However, in this part there is no stated “right or wrong” answer as the instrument was designed to consider that each mentor has a different approach. The answer to these question is in response to their number “1” in Part I. An answer of 1 is “Not Important”, 2-“A Little Important, 3-“Pretty Important, 4-“Very Important, 5-“Extremely Important” and 6-“Most Important”.

⁸⁵ M. J. Nakkula and J. T. Harris, “Assessment of Mentoring Relationships,” in *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, ed. D. L. DuBois, M. J. Karcher (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 100-117.

3. Section III: What is your match like? This section has a series of twenty-seven (27) questions that ask about their mentee. Again their response is to be made by selecting from a range of 1-6. An answer of 1 is

“Completely Disagree”, 2-“Mostly Disagree”, 3-“Tend to Disagree”, 4- “Tend to Agree”, 5-“Mostly Agree” and 6-“Completely Agree”.⁸⁶

Youth Mentoring Survey: “The Youth Mentoring Survey (YMS) is the most comprehensive measure of match relationship quality (MRQ) available with published validity evidence. It is completed by matched youth, is typically appropriate for youth aged 8-18, and typically takes 10-15 to administer.”⁸⁷ (See Appendix J.) The survey is divided into two sections:

How does your match feel? This section has a series of 25 questions that it asks the mentee about his or her mentor. They can choose from a range of 1-4 answers. An answer of 1 is “Not at all true”, 2-“A little true”, 3-“Pretty true” or 4-“Very true”.

What do you do with your mentor? This section has a series of 22 questions having 5 responses from which to choose. An answer of 1 is “Never”, 2-“Less than half the time”, 3-“Half the time”, 4-“More than half the time and 5-“Every time”.

Finally, there are 3 stand-alone questions: 1) Where do you meet with your mentor? They are given four (4) choices from which they can check all that apply. 2) Over the few months, how often have you usually gotten to see your mentor? Possible answers range from “Less than once a month” to “at least once a week.” 3) When you get

⁸⁶ “Expert and Affordable Mentoring Evaluation,” <http://www.mentoringevaluation.com> (accessed January 23, 2017).

⁸⁷ Ibid.

together with your mentor how much time do you usually spend together? Possible answer range from “one hour or less” to “most of the day”.⁸⁸

Peer Mentoring: Peer mentoring – “A process where there is mutual involvement in encouraging and enhancing learning and development between two peers, where peers are of similar hierarchical status or who perceive themselves as equals.”⁸⁹ Because the “One Up, One Down” and the “Princess to Queen” Cross-Peer Mentoring Module is led by youth and may be less formal, a process for evaluation is still necessary. Much of the content for the Princess to Queen groups will be adapted from my second book, “Preparing the Princess to Be Queen: With 31

Successpirations for the Princess”. These are motivational prompts as well as practical elaborations such as finance, banking, personal care, etc.⁹⁰ To this end, we have researched and recommend the use of the Northern Illinois University’s Peer Mentoring instrument (See Appendix K). The instrument is very rudimentary and should not create a learning curve and can be completed in about five (5) minutes. The only modification that was made was removing the university specific references from the instrument.

As Dr. Wyatt reminds, “mentoring can never be done in isolation.”⁹¹ These evaluation tools will be excellent resources for strengthening the program and expanding the resources available to assist both the mentor and mentee in giving and receiving maximum benefit.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ M. McDaugall and R. S. Beattie, “Peer Mentoring at Work the Nature and Outcomes of NonHierarchical Developmental Relationships,” abstract (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication, 1997).

⁹⁰ Deborah D. Jenkins, *Preparing the Princess to Be Queen: With 31 Successpirations for the Princess* (Bronx, NY: Urban Christian Publishing, 2010), 154-226.

⁹¹ Wyatt, 83.

The Bible tells us that Eli led Israel for forty years (1Sa 4:18) and that after him, Samuel continued as Israel's leader all the years of his life (1Sa 7:15) and that he returned home to Ramah and built an altar to the LORD (1Sa 7:17). Mentoring done to glorify the Lord and to lead another towards God is successful and will be both edifying to the mentor and the mentee. Having a means of evaluation keeps everyone moving in the same direction.

CHAPTER 9 MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

The Process

Though there has been difficulty in meeting, the Site Team has been very helpful, open and candid in considering my competency assessment and providing feedback. The summary of the Site Team's and my assessments of ministerial competencies is as follows:

The Assessments

As Theologian

Candidate understands the doctrine of the church, scripture and has a strong relationship with the members of her congregation. Candidates wishes to focus on the spiritual formation of those who do not fit into the traditional definition of a church-goer and expand ministry opportunities that will more readily draw all people into the church.

As Preacher

Strong, passionate proclaimer of the Word of God having a blend of both academia and a delivery which is discernable by the most educated and the least educated. Candidate's style is a blend of the proud tradition of Baptist preacher with the motivational flare of a 21st century preacher.

As Counselor

Candidate is a competent and skilled pastoral counselor who is easily approached by those in need. As a counselor, Candidate uses empathy as the catalyst to create a safe space for the intimate sharing of issues and concerns.

As Pastor/Shepherd

Candidate is a hands-on shepherd of the people of God. Candidate is clear about the spiritual authority given by God and is always mindful of the humility needed to be effective.

As Spiritual Leader

Candidate is intricately involved in getting to know those to whom she ministers which translate into effective spiritual leadership.

As Worship Leader

Candidate is well-trained as a “Baptist” Worship Leader. Candidate will develop 21st century Worship Leading skills that remain authentic to the Christian faith but removes any perceived denominational boundaries.

As Administrator

Candidate is a skillful Administrator of finances and other business responsibilities and delegates when necessary. Candidate needs to share some of the administrative skills that are transferable with someone who is dependable thus freeing her to strengthen some other areas of competency.

As Professional Skills

Candidate has good listening skills, is an encourager and has a positive attitude in most situations.

Competencies Chosen for Development

PREACHER – Develop Christ-centered transformative sermons that are reflective of the 21st century urban society which is largely governed by information delivery which is impactful but in a shorter amount of time.

Strategies:

I will develop a sermon series reflective of the challenges faced by families of the incarcerated and ways to strengthen/welcome them into the family of God using the Message version of the Bible. B) I will record the sermon series.

Evaluation:

A) I will request a written response from ministry leaders and participants.

ADMINISTRATOR

Strategies:

Using Patricia Lotich's SMART Church series, I will develop a curriculum and project evaluation and administrative tools which can be efficient and easily managed.

I will enlist ministry leaders and laity who can help lead and administer the program.

Evaluation:

A) The ministry leaders and laity involved in the project will spend a day reviewing and going through the curriculum and tools and assist in determining what should be kept, eliminated and tweaked.

	COMPETENCY	CONT.	DEVEL.	ATTENT.	START	SKIP	NO BASIS	TOTAL
1	Theologian	5						5
2	Preacher		5					5
3	Worship	5						5
	Leader							
4	Prophetic	5						5
5	Leader	5						5
6	Religious	5						5
	Education							
7	Counselor	4		1				5
8	Pastor	5						5
9	Spiritual Leader	5						5
10	Ecumenist	3					2	5
11	Witness or	4					1	5
	Evangelist							
12	Administrator		5					5
13	Professional	5						5
	TOTAL	51	10	1	0	0	3	65

Results Overview:

Meeting with the Site Team proved challenging but the Ministerial Competencies were considered. Each of the 5 participants has or has had a close working relationship with Deborah D. Jenkins. Her Site Team consists of ministry peers and those with whom she works alongside in ministry.

A) All agree that Deborah is a hard-working, dedicated and highly-regarded ministry leader. There is a mutual respect between the Site Team and Deborah.

- B) In terms of scoring, she received 51 “Continue” qualifying words out a possible 65. Eliminating “No Basis” responses leaves 62 qualifying word possibilities. In total, 51 of a possible 62 qualifying words or 82% of responses, indicated that the Team felt that Deborah’s overall ministerial competency exceeds expectations.
- C) The Team participated in the evaluation process and unanimously agreed that Deborah excelled in 8 out of the 13 competencies having already achieved these ministry goals. Those categories are Theologian, Worship Leader, Prophetic, Leader, Religious Education, Pastor and Professional Skills. Deborah recognizes that though the Team unanimously agrees she should continue there is always room for improvement.
- D) In the Ministerial Competency of “Counselor”, Deborah received 4 out of 5 qualifying points. One Team member scored her in the “Attention” category.
- E) The Competencies selected for Deborah to develop were also unanimously agreed upon by the Team. Those competencies are as “Preacher” and as “Administrator”. These scores were as a result of Deborah desiring to connect with the 21st century believer and seeker in a way which would allow her to reach beyond her current sphere. Her current preaching style is that of a traditional Baptist Preacher and in some ways that will assist her in the transition into a Gospel-driven motivational preacher. The group that she seeks to serve through this project will typically be those who have endured many of life’s challenges and therefore may require more encouragement,

empowerment and motivation to achieve greatness beyond their current situations.

F) The Team also agreed that although Deborah is a good Administrator currently she could benefit greatly by learning to delegate more often. She will be able to achieve more and complete more tasks without coming down to the wire if she surrounds herself with highly-competent individuals who can take some of the load away from her.

G) The Team believes that this initial process of developing her Demonstration Project Proposal has brought into clarity the amount of time, organization, prioritizing that is necessary to produce a quality project and to achieve the goals of being a Change Agent in the lives of those who desperately need a Christ-centered Mentoring Model for Children of the Formerly Incarcerated.

Further Development of Chosen Ministerial Competencies:

The agreed upon Ministerial Competencies that needed to be developed were As Preacher and As Administrator. The development of the preaching was to bring my preaching into a less traditional format which would meet the understanding and demand of the 21st century Seeker of Christ. I thought that by developing a preaching series and initially implementing it within my current worship service it would serve as a springboard to the expansion of the ministry to include a second worship service. This development has been delayed because the church has not moved to a second worship service as yet and the responsibilities to the church and community have expanded. To a great degree, my work as a Clergy Liaison with the NYPD became more demanding as more incidences of murders black males by officers and subsequent murders of officers by members of the community grew. I have been compelled by my commitment to

service to respond from a faith-leader perspective. In many ways, the NYPD became an extended congregation where I have been required to provide the same care and comfort as I do within the church. The church's afterschool program is a funded program and the reporting demands became increasingly more demanding. While this distraction seems like it's entirely a function of administration, the reality is any time taken away from the study and preparation of sermons also affects my efficiency as a Preacher. I actually did develop a year-long preaching series which focused on "Holiness, Prayer and Discipleship". However, it did not satisfy the competency development as it was delivered in the traditional Baptist style. As of January 30, 2017 the second worship service is scheduled to begin March 25, 2017, and will continue Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. for one hour. The sermon series has been developed around God's love, salvation, leadership, empowerment, grace and mercy themes. I believe these initial themes will reinforce the commitment to serving God and the recognition of a need for God in their lives which may at times be very challenging.

The competency development of "As Administrator" remains a challenge as during the project work and development only one church leader stepped up to take some of the load of responsibility off of me, Deacon Juanita Pressley (my oldest sister). Even during this time she experienced some personal setbacks which again called for me to retain some of the responsibilities I had hoped to permanently pass on to her. In the interim, I ordained two leaders to the Diaconate Ministry. One has become more available but requires a lot of leadership and has therefore not been able to take any responsibilities from me; and the other has all but abdicated her responsibilities. I have one minister on staff (unpaid) and that's my husband. When he's not preparing his

teaching lessons, he's working hard to maintain our economic household. I delayed investing in the Patricia Lotich Smart Church series. I took a one-week leave of absence in order to complete any lingering research needed for this project. I am the Director of our church's afterschool program and simply had no one to turn to as a replacement for a month, which would have been so helpful.

It is embarrassing to admit that I have accomplished so little in terms of the development of these ministerial competencies. It has left me feeling discouraged at times. It also shone a spotlight on how very poorly I take care of myself and my own needs.

I wrote my first book, *Leading Through Adversity: Lessons from the Prophets*, in 2004, and realize now that it's so very easy to write lessons that we want others to follow. However, rarely do we follow our own lessons or advice. I believe the Lord had me to pick up the book again but this time for myself. I needed to be reminded of the lessons I said God gave me for other that God also gave them for me. For instance, Lesson 7 says, "Periodic Assessments and Evaluations are needed in order to know that you are utilizing your resources well and so that you do not spend your life doing anything that does not satisfy."⁹² I have spent so much time taking care of others, responding to every need that I believed needed more attention and have missed so much in the process. I failed to consistently assess and evaluate how effective I am personally at rolling out the vision that I believe God has given me. I got distracted but never did I lose sight of God.

Alas, the church is holding steady as it seems everyone has settled into their roles, whatever those are perceived to be, and this allows for me to now focus on the outreach

⁹² Deborah D. Jenkins, *Leading Through Adversity: Lessons from the Prophets* (Bronx, NY: Urban Christian Publishing, 2004), 38.

for the second worship and to really dig in at establishing it firmly and moving towards being a true agent of change in the lives of these children and their families.

CHAPTER 10 FROM THERE TO HERE

It is 2017, and I a New Yorker by way of Montgomery, Alabama now believes that I am where God wants me to be! God has blessed me with what has been more than a spectacular life in Christ. One which is filled with a desire to serve God for the rest of my life. I cannot see serving God apart from serving God's people. There's a song by Kindred the Family Soul called "All My People" and it sums it how I feel about people, especially my African-American community. The lyrics are:

"I want all my people around me
Everybody living good
Everybody eatin good
Everybody chillin
Everybody eatin good
Everybody living good
I want for my brother what I want for myself..."⁹³

I call this my theme song because this is truly how I feel towards others. I have visited youth detention centers, I've seen kids go off track and end up on drugs, in jail, in gangs, pregnant and dead because at some point in their young lives— someone stopped providing them with guidance. These are not children limited to my targeted population to serve—but children across the spectrum. Imagine having the added challenge of being the child of the formerly incarcerated. Add to that, the many challenges of being a child

⁹³ "Kindred The Family Soul--All My People," *Genius*, <https://genius.com/Kindred-the-family-soul-all-mu-people-lyrics>. (accessed January 23, 2017).

growing up in the 21st century where stimulus, both good and bad, is readily available to you within seconds.

I often wonder had my mother not been that steady hand of support, encouragement and love where my sisters and I might have ended up? If my mother hadn't instilled a great sense of love and devotion to God in us, where might we be? If my mother hadn't pursued her own education with excellence and had she not insisted on the same for each of us—would we have ever completed high school? Had my mother not taken us to the beautiful New York Botanical Gardens every Saturday—would we have focused more on our environment than the freeing and relaxing atmosphere of the Lord's creation in nature?

To be sure, I could go on and on about the benefits of growing up as one of “Dorothy's Girls” but I won't. Instead through the plan that I've presented in this Demonstration Project, I will help other children who identify with my demographics achieve success! The Under the Tent Mentoring Model will be one that can be duplicated nationwide by churches and youth organizations and people who simply want to make a difference, one child at a time.

I recall having Dr. Arlee Griffin, Pastor of Berean Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, as my Professor for Church Administration, at New York Theological 87 Seminary. I had his class while I was a matriculated student in the Master of Divinity program. I recall him saying something that has stuck with me all these years. He shared with the class that he'd studied zoology, in undergraduate school. When God called him into ministry he wondered how on earth zoology would help him in ministry. He said that eventually God found a way to weave the lessons of zoology into ministry for him. He

wanted to impress upon us that there's not one thing that God allows in our lives that he doesn't also allow for its use.

I shared that to say that I truly believe that everything that God has allowed in my life has prepared me for this moment! I'm prepared to devote the rest of my life to training others to mentor these vulnerable children. To this end, I have formally organized the Pressley Family Institute, LLC, to be the training provider to every church, faith-based organization, neighborhood group of women and men who gather around their kitchen table and wonder how can they be an Eli to an Ephraim and Manasseh.

This is the way forward!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

UNDER THE TENT: A CHRIST-CENTERED APPROACH TO
MENTORING CHILDREN OF THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED

BY

DEBORAH D. JENKINS

A DEMONSTRATION PROPOSAL

New York Theological Seminary

February 1, 2016

Challenge Statement

More than 2.7 million children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent and approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives. As Senior Pastor, at Faith @ Work Christian Church in Bronx, NY, I work with the at-risk group of children whose parents have had criminal justice involvement and I've witnessed the affects it has on the children. This demonstration project will create a training process that will prepare leaders to support affected youth ages 10-12 through the implementation of a comprehensive mentoring process.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING

More than 2.7 million children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent and approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.¹ As Senior Pastor, at Faith @ Work Christian Church in Bronx, NY, I work with the at-risk group of children whose parents have had criminal justice involvement and I've witnessed the affects it has on the children. This demonstration project will create a training process that will prepare leaders to support affected youth ages 10-12 through the implementation of a comprehensive mentoring process.

Nelson Mandela once said, "Religion is one of the most important forces in the world". Whether you are a Christian, Muslim, a Buddhist, a Jew, or a Hindu, religion is a great force, and it can help one have command of one's own morality, one's own behavior, and one's own attitude."² I believe in second chances, for all humanity, this quote by the great Nelson Madiba Mandela stirs my soul. It is one of profound necessity for anyone who's ever been incarcerated and for the people who love them. For many and various reasons literally millions of United States citizens find themselves incarcerated at either the local, State or federal levels of government every year. A large percentage of this number will, after release, find themselves returning and often it becomes the vicious cycle of life for many who through it all lose not only hope but the

¹Pew Research Center, Collateral Costs: Incarcerations' Effect on Economic Mobility, 2011

²Reconnect Africa <http://www.reconnectafrica.com/leadership/the-legacy-of-mandela.html> (Accessed December 5, 2014).

love and support of a once loving and supportive family.³ It is my strong conviction that there has been a disconnection in the spiritual formation of the individual who has been incarcerated and who continues recidivate. This has undoubtedly left an impression on the family which awaits the return of the incarcerated member. Some families are drawn to faith by the experience and others lose faith. Believing that faith is key to reducing recidivism and avoiding incarceration, for the children of the incarcerated, this project will address the spiritual formation of these families through practical and faith services. “Familial incarceration can be characterized as an “ambiguous loss” leading to “disenfranchised grief.”⁴This will be the challenge I address in this project.

The vision I have is to create a forgiving, healing, restorative community for the formerly incarcerated with a focus on reducing recidivism and ensuring that those at-risk of incarceration in his/her family have viable alternatives—where all involved are committed and determined to succeed, recognize and acknowledge that central to success is a vibrant and cultivated life in Christ. Parenthetically, while this is unapologetically a Christian outreach, services will be made available to those of other faith-traditions in the Spirit of Christ. This assertion is in keeping with Jesus Christ’s testimony, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.” (John 10:16 NIV) Guided by the LORD, the Pressley Family Restoration Institute and its flagship outreach, *Under the Tent*, will bless, restore, heal and see many families become spiritually centered successes. This newly formed organization will offer primarily Mentoring, Camping and

³Phillips, S., Gates, T.2010, A conceptual framework for understanding the stigmatization of children of incarcerated parents. *Journal of Child and Family Studies* , 20,286-294.

⁴Arditti, J.2012, *Parental Incarceration and the Family*. (Pages 103-105) New York University Press

Afterschool services for children of the formerly incarcerated as well as an annual family retreat 75% funded by the organization and the family bearing a 25% responsibility. The belief is that if there is a focus on the stability and success of the children the formerly incarcerated parent will have greater incentive to reestablish himself/herself in the lives of the family unit. In addition, the Institute will establish relationships with community stakeholders as a resource for the parents to easily navigate the basic systems necessary to support themselves and their families. During the six to nine month project demonstration the retreat, summer camp, afterschool and resource guides will all be completed.

Each year more than 200,000 people are arrested in New York City. Of the 731 Bronx defendants annually, 57.2% are rearrested for any crime within one year.⁵ As a pastor I minister to many, within this population. While there are many services available to this population there is no specific focus on the relationship with God. To this end, we will develop an annual Family Retreat that will focus on establishing or reestablishing a relationship with God, family and society. This annual retreat will be the primary entry point for 50% of those receiving services. The annual retreat will take place after the Informational Breakfast where families commit to attend and by attending they are also pledging to attempt to unify around ensuring that their children have viable alternatives to incarceration and the formerly incarcerated parent greater reason to avoid recidivism.

As I am a member of the Bronx Reentry Task Force and serve as New York Police Department (NYPD) Clergy Liaison in the 45th Precinct (which borders the 47th

⁵Data Analytic Recidivism Tool (DART) <http://recidivism.cityofnewyork.us/> (Accessed December 5, 2014).

Precinct) and having worked with the New York City (NYC) Department of Probation, I will draw upon all of these relationships to recruit the first five to ten families to be served. Initial efforts will be concentrated in the Northeast Bronx. The program will be located, initially, within Faith @ Work Christian Church. Our church motto is that we are “Christ-centered, family-focused with power and authority.” It is in this spirit that we will seek to support the formerly incarcerated and their families. The church is starting a second worship service that will be designed especially for this target audience as there is a recognition that life has dealt these families many blows and encouragement through faith, we believe, will help them in staying focused on regaining their family strength.

Faith @ Work Christian Church is the church where I pastor along with my husband. We founded the ministry October 9, 2005 with a mission to reach men, women, boys and girls and help them to live up to their full potential through teaching and preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As the number of those incarcerated continues to climb serving this population has become an important part of that initial mission statement that was not specifically targeted to them. That I suppose is one of the blessings of having a church mission to serve all of God’s created. The greatest emphasis will be on the children of the formerly incarcerated between grades 5 through 12. This is a strategic emphasis as we believe that most parents desire to see their children thrive and in fact children often serve as a parent’s motivation to do their very best.

Faith @ Work Christian Church is located in a unique community within the Bronx, New York. It is the Co-Op City area of the northeast Bronx. It is a “city” within a city with 60,000 middle income families. It is considered the largest cooperative housing development in the United States and holds the distinction of being a Naturally

Occurring Retirement Community (NORC). In addition to these unique qualities, Coop City is strategically located just two miles east of one of the most dangerous public housing projects, The Edenwald Projects and two miles south of one of Westchester County, New York's most prestigious communities, New Rochelle, NY. This is significant in that while Coop City is a middle income community it borders a dangerous community and a safer community, within it are these same conditions. So the reality is that zip codes do not determine the conditions of families nor does it exclude the need we all have for a viable relationship with God. Having a relationship with God is what will ultimately bring us all to a successful life in Christ. Under the Tent will serve any formerly incarcerated person, living in the Bronx, and his/her family which is willing to put the establishment or reestablishment of a relationship with God at the center of their lives.

CHAPTER 2 PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Jesus in Matthew 19:14 said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Holding many interpretations for many according to their social location—for me the most significant interpretation points to the failure of adults to shepherd the young into a thriving adulthood. This failure has left too many vulnerable to the failing education systems, poverty, homelessness and far too many becoming known to the juvenile justice system.

While the global community of adults bear responsibility, according to the biblical passage of Mark 10:13, Jesus holds those who know the Gospel to a greater standard. The body of Christ seems to have stopped doing as Christ did. Christ was said to have taken “the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. (Mt. 19:16) How does the church respond to these vulnerable children? More specifically, how does the church create sustainable alternatives to involvement with the criminal justice system for youth between the ages of 12 and 18 years?

This project will demonstrate how Faith @ Work Christian Church (FATWCC) can create a deliberate Christian-model of a Family-Focused Approach to Alternative to Incarceration for Youth. FATWCC is an independent Baptist church which holds fast to the traditions of Baptist doctrine. We believe that through an unwavering commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ lived daily believers are empowered to transform their own lives as well as that of the people they encounter daily.

The church is located in the northeast Bronx section known as Coop City. It is a middle-income community of 60,000 residents and has more than 12 houses of worship. We are in the 45th Precinct of the New York Police Department (NYPD) which is the largest precinct in the Bronx and we border the 47th Precinct. The significance of the close proximity to the 47th Precinct is that there are vibrant rivalries between the youth in the Coop City area and what is known as “The Valley” in the 47th Precinct. Coop City has an Education Complex which includes 2 elementary, 2 middle and one large high school having several smaller schools within it. In addition, there is a stand-alone elementary and middle school in the fifth section of Coop City, known as Section 5 which also stands apart from the remaining four sections. Obviously, having so many schools there are many children and the potential for rivalry, gangs and criminal behavior is heightened.

The criminal behavior can range from truancy to fights and from fights to more serious crimes. I believe that through the church’s current ministries of outreach which services many of the families experiencing any level of contact with the criminal justice system (including parents) that by deliberately expanding our outreach we can make a positive impact on the lives of these families.

The church has a thriving afterschool and summer camp program, close ties to several of the schools and the NYPD. Through these relationships we have been able to identify several warning signs for at-risk youth. They are both at-risk of dropping out of school and becoming known to the juvenile justice system.

Youth being at-risk became the issue of focus because I believe that for the youth to be able to proceed successfully through life the church must make bold moves to bring

them and their families into the presence of the Lord. The children must be allowed to come to Jesus!

Having the Education Complex complicates things for the community because children literally travel from throughout the Bronx and even the other boroughs. This dynamic gives rise to greater concerns for youth safety. These concerns go far beyond the physical safety implications, but also includes the biblical, historical, economic, psychological and spiritual.

When considering what's at stake biblically one must remember how King Nebuchadnezzar very intentionally captured the best and brightest that Israel had to offer in their youth. (Daniel 1:2-7) If we, the church, don't protect our youth from those who would seek to capture them and take them off we will never know how much potential they have.

When considering what's at stake historically one must remember that for decades now prisons and the number of prison cells needed have been calculated based upon the grades of third grade African-American boys in a few States⁶. While this may not be the standard throughout the nation the fact that it has ever been done is a disturbing and telling one. What is a fact is that "the system disproportionately targets youth of color and youth with disabilities. Inequities in areas such as school discipline, policing practices, high-stakes testing, wealth and healthcare distribution, school "grading" systems, and the prison-industrial complex all contribute to the Pipeline."⁷ It is

⁶Multimedia and Internet @ School
<http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/jan01/burmark.htm>(Accessed February 2, 2015).

⁷New York Civil Liberties Union <http://www.nyclu.org/schooltoprison>(Accessed February 2, 2015).

not feasible for all churches to open schools but I believe we can all agree that more can be done to disrupt the School to Prison Pipeline.

To be sure, whenever a child is at-risk he or she may also experience psychological effects. In the study, *No Safe Haven II: The Effects of Violence Exposure on Urban Youth* a cross-sectional study of more than 1,000 6th, 8th and 10th grade students exposed to violence documented that violence exposure was more closely related with internalizing symptoms for younger adolescents than their older counterparts.⁸ It is my opinion, that in either case whether internalized or externalized we mustn't be dismissive of the possible affect that exposure to violence has on the healthy psychological development of youth and how our failure to address and acknowledge it, within the church, may have not only present lasting psychological affects but spiritual as well.

If we fail to act deliberately to protect and keep our youth moving forward and growing normally then we will essentially repeat the biblical details of Daniel and other youth with promising minds, we will continue to perpetuate the ramifications of the historical precedent of preparing young African-Americans for prison even before completing school which obviously has far reaching economic impact as well. All of these challenges lead straight to my thesis that the church, Faith @ Work Christian Church in particular, must confront our failures with the truth of the Gospel and engage not only the youth who is at-risk but his or her entire family to ensure that their entire family unit is centered in Christ and able to succeed on each of these levels.

⁸Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0890856709630926> (Accessed February 2, 2015).

CHAPTER 3 PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: To raise awareness among churches and communities about the need to provide alternative to incarceration services to families with members at-risk of incarceration.

- Strategy 1: Make Presentations at churches, Building Association and 45th Precinct Council and Community Board meetings.
- Strategy 2: Coordinate three (3) Informational Workshops with Det. Kim Ford to recruit interested families who have been identified as at-risk (specifically youth).
- Strategy 3: Host an Introductory Questions and Answers (Q/A) Breakfast for potential families.

Evaluation of Goal 1: A pre-test will be administered to determine participant's knowledge about what vulnerabilities to incarceration both youth and adult family members.

Goal 2: Develop the Under the Tent Mentoring and Training Curriculum

- Strategy 1: Write the training curriculum and manual draft.
- Strategy 2: Identify and select a Curriculum Review Team.
- Strategy 3: Hold a 1-Day Writing and Review Retreat to finalize the curriculum.

Evaluation of Goal 2: The final draft of the curriculum is approved and ready to add to be used as a promotional and recruitment tool.

Goal 3: Identify and partner with community stakeholders and relevant resource providers.

- Strategy 1: Create a Tri-fold brochure and a Program Design/Descriptive One-Sheet to electronically transmit to 20 preliminarily selected groups of community resource providers.
- Strategy 2: Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with those community partners/stakeholders willing to partner.
- Strategy 3: Develop a Training Manual/Curriculum and Partner Resource Directory.
- Strategy 4: Provide a 1-day “Train-the-Trainer seminar for community volunteers and partner staff which will prepare each for the facilitation of and program roll out to participating families.

Evaluation of Goal 3: At least 5% of selected community partners will enter into the MOU agreement with 100% of those committed community volunteers and partners participating in the 3-hour training.

Goal 4: Plan and Host a Family Retreat using the Flagship *Under the Tent* Curriculum

- Strategy 1: Identify a retreat site and secure dates according to volunteers and partners schedules.
- Strategy 2: Develop Criteria for Participant Selection and Application Process for Perspective Families.
- Strategy 3: Plan a Fundraiser and solicit sponsorship support, from among community partners and churches, to underwrite costs associated with the retreat.
- Strategy 4: Full implementation of the Under the Tent curriculum. Strategy 5: Evaluation of the curriculum by participants with both pre and post retreat tests developed from the curriculum.

Evaluation of Goal 4: Ability to select at least five (5) families with up to a combined 20 members and to raise 75% of retreat’s expenses. In addition, to receive

constructive quantitative feedback, from retreat participants, as to the effectiveness of the curriculum.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Biblical/Theological

Where in Scripture is restoration from physical bondage a catalyst toward greater or renewed dedication to a faith in God? What challenges face those who are restored in maintaining their newly committed lives to Christ/God? How can a former dependence upon self be permanently transferred to God. What are the theological barriers that have prevented many at-risk of or formerly incarcerated from establishing lives where Christ is central to all they do and thus reducing the number of those viewed as at-risk and those who recidivate?

Social/Political/Economic (Ethical)

What is the social impact for those who are at-risk of incarceration and their families, since 2.26M people in the United States are incarcerated and another 5.1% of all persons in the United States are at-risk of incarceration during their lifetime?⁹ What role does politics play in creating an environment for successful reintegration or is the political climate one which reinforces criminal involvement? Are there institutionalized factors which contribute to the economic challenges faced by this population? How can the 7 year/Jubilee Model of Justice and Restoration remove barriers to ensure success?

⁹US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs
<http://bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ljgsfp.pdf> (Accessed July 3, 2015).

Spiritual Life and Practice

How can sound biblical teachings and worship which focuses on gratitude to God and emphasis on prayer reinforce or strengthen spiritual formation? For this project to be successful participants will need to demonstrate a reliance upon God for a “Lasting Second Chance” through faithful participation in at least one worship service and one Bible Study and the development of a Prayer Life and the annual attendance at the Under the Tent retreat. How can the church modify its worship to include all regardless of background? Can the church successfully create a worship experience which requires reciprocity to ensure accountability with the church and participants? What are the current traditional or structural practices which need to be deconstructed to ensure the participant’s success?

CHAPTER 5 EVALUATION PROCESS

Method of Evaluation 1: In-depth Pre-Commitment Interview/Questionnaire.

All participants will undergo a 60 minute interview with the Under the Tent Director to determine if the fit is appropriate and measure likelihood of participant's success.

Method of Evaluation 2: Commitment Agreement.

All participants who successfully complete and advance from the Pre-Commitment Interview will be asked to sign a commitment agreement which details program expectations and what the participant can expect from the program.

Method of Evaluation 3: Post-Commitment Interview/Questionnaire.

All participants will participate in a 60 minute exit interview with the Under the Tent Director to determine the effectiveness of the program design and their new spiritual walk status. This will be a repeat of the Pre-Commitment Questionnaire with additional questions that can only be asked after completion (i.e. what was most effective, what should be changed, how important is God in your day to day life?).

CHAPTER 6 MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

The Process

Though there has been difficulty in meeting, the Site Team has been very helpful, open and candid in considering my competency assessment and providing feedback. The summary of the Site Team's and my assessments of ministerial competencies is as follows:

The Assessments

As Theologian

Candidate understands the doctrine of the church, scripture and has a strong relationship with the members of her congregation. Candidates wishes to focus on the spiritual formation of those who do not fit into the traditional definition of a church-goer and expand ministry opportunities that will more readily draw all people into the church.

As Preacher

Strong, passionate proclaimer of the Word of God having a blend of both academia and a delivery which is discernable by the most educated and the least educated. Candidate's style is a blend of the proud tradition of Baptist preacher with the motivational flare of a 21st century preacher.

As Counselor

Candidate is a competent and skilled pastoral counselor who is easily approached by those in need. As a counselor, Candidate uses empathy as the catalyst to create a safe space for the intimate sharing of issues and concerns.

As Pastor/Shepherd

Candidate is a hands-on shepherd of the people of God. Candidate is clear about the spiritual authority given by God and is always mindful of the humility needed to be effective.

As Spiritual Leader

Candidate is intricately involved in getting to know those to whom she ministers which translate into effective spiritual leadership.

As Worship Leader

Candidate is well-trained as a “Baptist” Worship Leader.

Candidate will develop 21st century Worship Leading skills that remain authentic to the Christian faith but removes any perceived denominational boundaries.

As Administrator

Candidate is a skillful Administrator of finances and other business responsibilities and delegates when necessary. Candidate needs to share some of the administrative skills that are transferable with someone who is dependable thus freeing her to strengthen some other areas of competency.

As Professional Skills

Candidate has good listening skills, is an encourager and has a positive attitude in most situations.

Competencies Chosen for Development

PREACHER – Develop Christ-centered transformative sermons that are reflective of the 21st century urban society which is largely governed by information delivery which is impactful but in a shorter amount of time.

Strategies:

I will develop a sermon series reflective of the challenges faced by families of the incarcerated and ways to strengthen/welcome them into the family of God using the Message version of the Bible. D) I will record the sermon series.

Evaluation:

B) I will request a written response from ministry leaders and participants.

ADMINISTRATOR

Strategies:

Using Patricia Lotich's SMART Church series, I will develop a curriculum and project evaluation and administrative tools which can be efficient and easily managed.

C) I will enlist ministry leaders and laity who can help lead and administer the program.

Evaluation:

C) The ministry leaders and laity involved in the project will spend a day reviewing and going through the curriculum and tools and assist in determining what should be kept, eliminated and tweaked.

Ministerial Competencies Scores and Overview:

	COMPETENCY	CONT.	DEVEL.	ATTENT.	START	SKIP	NO BASIS	TOTAL
1	Theologian	5						5
2	Preacher		5					5
3	Worship	5						5
	Leader							
4	Prophetic	5						5
5	Leader	5						5
6	Religious	5						5
	Education							
7	Counselor	4		1				5
8	Pastor	5						5
9	Spiritual Leader	5						5
10	Ecumenist	3					2	5
11	Witness or	4					1	5
	Evangelist							
12	Administrator		5					5
13	Professional	5						5
	TOTAL	51	10	1	0	0	3	65

Results Overview:

Meeting with the Site Team proved challenging but the Ministerial Competencies were considered. Each of the 5 participants has or has had a close working relationship with Deborah D. Jenkins. Her Site Team consists of ministry peers and those with whom she works alongside in ministry. All agree that Deborah is a hard-working, dedicated and highly-regarded ministry leader.

There is a mutual respect between the Site Team and Deborah.

In terms of scoring, she received 51 “Continue” qualifying words out a possible 65. Eliminating “No Basis” responses leaves 62 qualifying word possibilities. In total, 51 of a possible 62 qualifying words or 82% of responses, indicated that the Team felt that Deborah’s overall ministerial competency exceeds expectations. The Team participated in the evaluation process and unanimously agreed that Deborah excelled in 8 out of the 13 competencies having already achieved these ministry goals. Those categories are Theologian, Worship Leader, Prophetic, Leader, Religious Education, Pastor and Professional Skills. Deborah recognizes that though the Team unanimously agrees she should continue there is always room for improvement. In the Ministerial Competency of “Counselor”, Deborah received 4 out of 5 qualifying points. One Team member scored her in the “Attention” category.

The Competencies selected for Deborah to develop were also unanimously agreed upon by the Team. Those competencies are as “Preacher” and as “Administrator”. These scores were as a result of Deborah desiring to connect with the 21st century believer and seeker in a way which would allow her to reach beyond her current sphere. Her current preaching style is that of a traditional Baptist Preacher and in some ways that will assist her in the transition into a Gospel-driven motivational preacher. The group that she seeks

to serve through this project will typically be those who have endured many of life's challenges and therefore may require more encouragement, empowerment and motivation to achieve greatness beyond their current situations.

The Team also agreed that although Deborah is a good Administrator currently she could benefit greatly by learning to delegate more often. She will be able to achieve more and complete more tasks without coming down to the wire if she surrounds herself with highly-competent individuals who can take some of the load away from her.

The Team believes that this initial process of developing her Demonstration Project Proposal has brought into clarity the amount of time, organization, prioritizing that is necessary to produce a quality project and to achieve the goals of being a Change Agent in the lives of those who desperately need a Family-Focused Alternative to Incarceration model.

APPENDIX 1: TIMELINE

Date	Task/Activity	Tools to Complete Task	Person Responsible
February	Proposal Approved by		
2016	Director		Dr. Wanda Lundy
	Set dates for Goal 1	List of churches/community	Deborah Jenkins
	and prepare mailings	partners	
	Begin writing on Research	Schedule deliberate library	Deborah Jenkins
	Question 1	trips to Columbia/Union/NYPL	
	Select Dmin. Prayer Team		
March			
2016	First Meeting with Advisor	Meet at NYTS and bring copy of	Deborah
Jenkins		approved DP	
	Check RSVP for Q/A	Electronic and Snail Mail con-	Deborah Jenkins
	Breakfast for families. Secure	firmations	
	Invitations to make Presen-		tations
	Meet with Site Team	Free Conference Call	Deborah Jenkins
April	Plan/Coordinate 3	Meeting with Det. Ford	Det. Ford
2016	Information Workshops	Flyers, Powerpoint	
		w/Det. Kim Ford	Presentation
	Set Date and Host Q/A		
	Breakfast for families		

	Begin writing Mentoring/ Training Curriculum	Gathered research re- sources for compiling	Deborah Jenkins and Curriculum Team
	Identify/Select Curriculum Review Team	Curriculum team	
	Plan 1-Day Writing/Review	Check calendar for	Deborah Jenkins/Site
	Retreat and Family Retreat	available dates and re- treat sites	Team Member
May	Host Family Recruitment	Breakfast purchase, identi-	Members of Prayer
2016	Breakfast for families	fied families	Team
	Host 1_Day Writing/Review	Copies of Curriculum and	Curriculum Team
	Retreat	participants	Member/D. Jenkins
	Identify Community Stake-	Contact holders/Resource Providers	
	Create Tri-fold Brochure/ One-Sheet	Microsoft Publisher	Deacon J. Pressley
	Create/Execute Memorandum of	Create document in	Deborah Jenkins
	Understanding	Consult w/legal for review.	
	Plan 1_day "Train-the-Trainer seminar for Community Stakeholders	Secure space at Faith II	Deborah Jenkins
	Solicit Family Sponsors for the Retreat	Request church member Sponsors	Deborah Jenkins
June	Finalize Under the	Revise and meet with	Deborah Jenkins/

2016	Tent Curriculum (Men- Curriculum Team Curriculum Team Training)	toring	and
	Host 1-Day Train-the-Trainer Seminar		Deborah Jenkins
	Host Family Retreat June 18-19	Projectors, flip charts, markers, name badges	Deborah Jenkins/ Stakeholders
	Quarterly Progress Report Distribution		Deacon J. Pressley
	Prayer Team Meeting		Deborah Jenkins
July	Compile all data from Retreats and Questionnaires		Deborah Jenkins
2016	Send follow-up letter to families with schedule of Summer Camp/Monthly Mentoring and Worship Services		for analysis Site Team Member
	Resume Research for all 3 Research Questions		Deborah Jenkins
	Meet with Advisor/Site Team		D. Jenkins/Advisor/ Site Team
	Prayer Team Meeting		
August	Writing and Research		Deborah Jenkins

2016	Complete Project Draft	
September	Fine Tune Project Draft and	Deborah Jenkins
2016	Share with Site Team	
	Revisit Ministerial Com-	Site Team/D. Jenkins
	petencies and Evaluation of by Site Team	
October	Full Demonstration Project to	Deborah Jenkins
2016	be reviewed with Advisor/ Site Team	
	Meet w/Prayer Team	Deborah Jenkins
	Send Quarterly Report	Deacon J. Pressley
November	Make final revisions based	Deborah Jenkins
2016	upon feedback from Advisor/ Site Team	
December	Prepare Revised/Final Project	Deborah Jenkins
2016	for Editing Meet w/Prayer Team	Deborah Jenkins/ Prayer Team
January	Send Edited Final Project	Deborah Jenkins
2017	to Advisor Prior to Binding	

APPENDIX 2:
BUDGET

BUDGET ITEM	COST
OFFICE SUPPLIES	IN-KIND*
POSTAGE	IN-KIND*
PRINTING	IN-KIND*
RETREAT(S) MEALS/LODGING	\$3,000
MEETINGS/MEALS	\$250
MISCELLANEOUS	\$200
TOTAL	\$3,450

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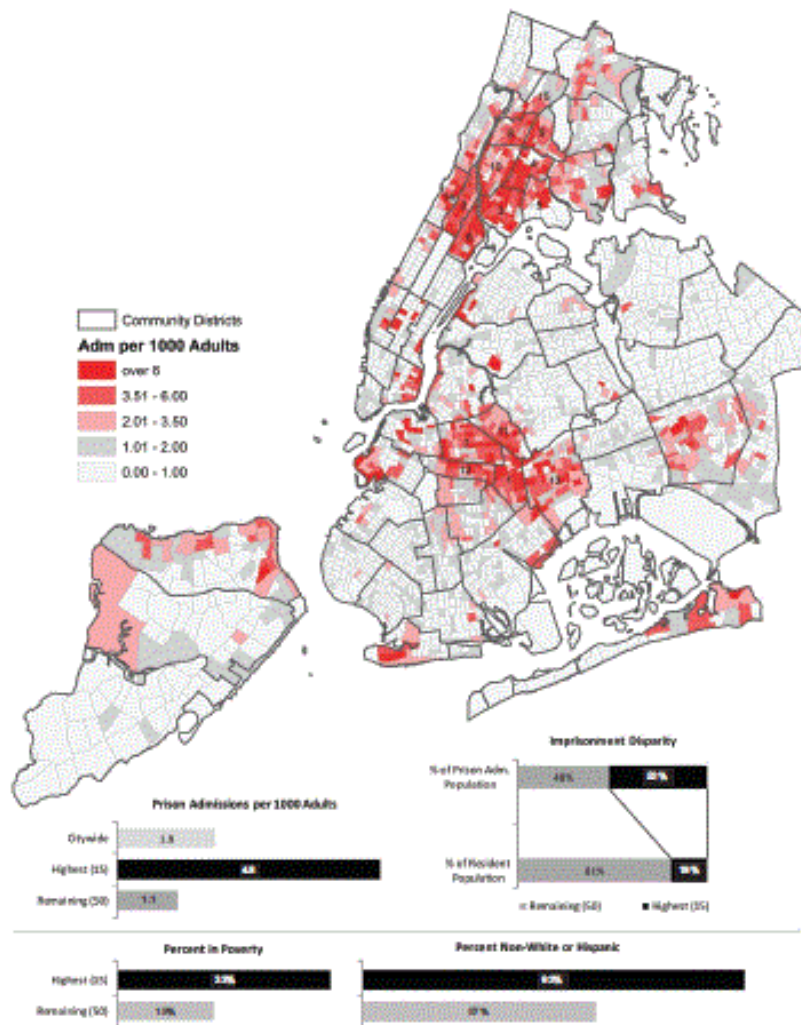
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APPENDIX B GROWTH OF INCARCERATION

The Growth of Incarceration in the United States: Exploring Causes and Consequences

CONSEQUENCES FOR COMMUNITIES

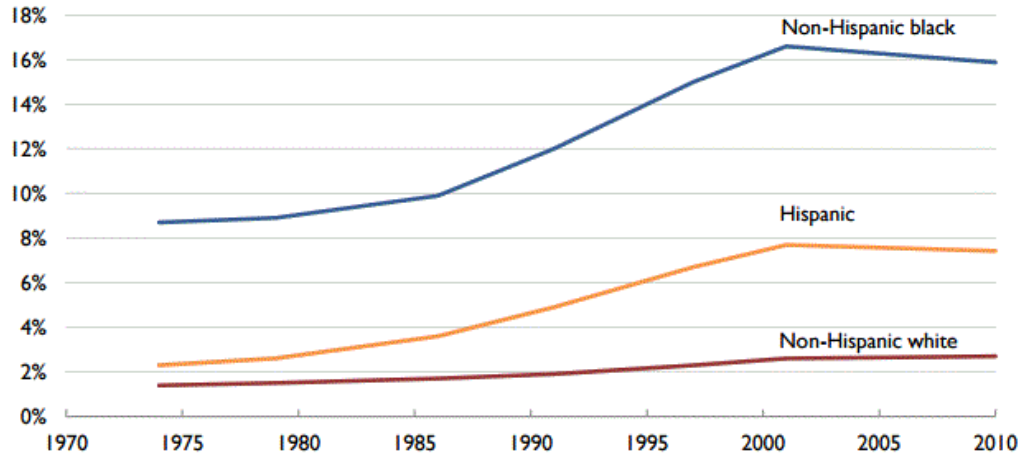
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APPENDIX C
FIGURE 13 THE MOYNIHAN REPORT REVISITED

**Figure 13. Black Men Have Spent Time in Prison
at Disproportionately High Rates**



Sources: Bonczar (2003) for 1974–2001; authors' calculations for 2010.
Note: Rates are for men ever incarcerated in state or federal prison.

APPENDIX D
PRE/POST-ASSESSMENT

UNDER THE TENT: A CHRIST-CENTERED MENTORING MODEL FOR
CHILDREN OF THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED

Demonstration Project Work-Weekend

All Day Mentor Training/Curriculum Development

Outline

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT
2. BACKGROUND: HOW DID WE GET HERE?
3. PRE-ASSESSMENT ADMINISTERED
4. WHY THIS POPULATION?
5. RESEARCH PRESENTATION
6. WHAT IS A MENTOR?
7. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF AN ADULT MENTOR?
8. WHAT DOES IT TAKES TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADULT MENTOR?
9. CROSS-AGE PEER MENTORING MODULES
10. IMPLEMENTATION OF A MENTORING PROGRAM—David Aviles
11. HEALING COMMUNITIES—Dr. Harold Dean Trulear
12. CULTURAL BRIDGING—Min. Tandra Birkett
13. POST-TRAINING QUIZ/POST-TRAINING ASSESSMENT
14. CONCLUSION

MENTOR'S PRE AND POST-ASSESSMENT

Demographics (NOT TO BE REPEATED)

1. Are you male or female? _____M _____F
2. What is your age group? 13-24____ 25-35____ 36-45____ 46-55____ 56+____
3. What is your ethnicity? African-American____ Caucasian____ Hispanic/Latino____ Asian____ Other____
4. What is a mentor (in your own words)? _____

5. Why do you want to be a mentor? ____To help others ____Because my Pastor asked ____Because children need it ____Because I believe I can make a difference ____I don't know
6. Do you know someone who is/has been incarcerated? ____Y ____N
7. Do you have a family member who has ever been or who is incarcerated? ____Y ____N
8. Do you think that children who have parents who've been incarcerated will also become incarcerated? ____Y ____N ____Maybe
9. Do you think you can commit to mentoring a child for a year? ____Y ____N ____Maybe
10. Can you devote up to 6 hours per month to mentoring a child? ____Y ____N ____Maybe
- 11.If you receive training and support, do you think you can stick with it? ____Y ____N ____Maybe
- 12.In order of importance (5 being most important) which do you think will make you the strongest Mentor?
 - _____Understanding the curriculum
 - _____Praying for the child
 - _____Praying for myself
 - _____Being Committed
 - _____Being paired with a child who is a good match.

POST CURRICULUM TRAINING ASSESSMENT

1. What is a Mentor?
2. What is a Cross-Age Mentor?
3. Name at least two (2) positive outcomes for the child being mentored.
4. What are the three (3) activities for the cross-age mentoring module?
5. Name an important element of program Implementation.
6. What is the primary element of the Healing Communities model?
7. What is Cultural Bridging?

APPENDIX E

RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

BENCHMARKS

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

- B.1.1** Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of mentoring in the program.
- B.1.2*** Program utilizes recruitment strategies that build positive attitudes and emotions about mentoring.
- B.1.3*** Program recruits mentors whose skills, motivations, and backgrounds best match the goals and structure of the program.
- B.1.4*** Program encourages mentors to assist with recruitment efforts by providing them with resources to ask individuals they know, who meet the eligibility criteria of the program, to be a mentor.
- B.1.5*** Program trains and encourages mentees to identify and recruit appropriate mentors for themselves, when relevant.

MENTEE AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN RECRUITMENT

- B.1.6*** Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of being mentored in the program.
- B.1.7** Program recruits mentees whose needs best match the services offered by the program.

ENHANCEMENTS

MENTOR RECRUITMENT

- E.1.1*** Program communicates to mentors about how mentoring and volunteering can benefit them.
- E.1.2** Program has a publicly available written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentors in its program.
- E.1.3*** Program uses multiple strategies to recruit mentors (e.g., direct ask, social media, traditional methods of mass communication, presentations, referrals) on an ongoing basis.

MENTEE AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN RECRUITMENT

APPENDIX F

ONE UP, ONE DOWN AND PRINCESS TO QUEEN

ONE UP, ONE DOWN

This is the male Peer Mentoring Module of the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum. It is designed to pair a male teen with one of the 10-12 year old male mentees. The basic premise is that an older child who is thriving (**One Up**) will volunteer his time to mentor a child who isn't thriving (**One Down**).

PRINCESS TO QUEEN

This is the female Peer Mentoring Module of the Under the Tent Mentoring Curriculum. It is designed to pair a female teen with one of the 10-12 year old female mentees. The basic premise is that an older child who is thriving will mentor a younger female whose familial challenges are affecting her overall well-being. The mentee may need self-esteem, hygiene and motivational support. This female module is designed quite differently from the male peer mentoring module in that it is also dependent upon the adult female to be success. The Peer Mentor (Princess) and the Mentee (Princess-in-the Making) will work closely with the paired Adult Female Mentor (Queen).

RECRUITMENT:

Peer Mentors will be recruited from churches, community organizations and schools. In exchange for their service as Mentors they will receive Service Credits for their high school transcripts and a Letter of Recommendation for college, upon successful completion of the agreed upon service period. This Peer Mentoring Model will be one of cross-age peer mentoring. Cross-age peer mentoring refers to programs in which an older youth (mentor) is matched with a younger student (mentee) for the purpose of guiding and supporting the mentee in many areas of his academic, social, and emotional

development. Relationships tend to last for the whole school year, when possible, and some programs include summer break activities to keep matches engaged and help with school transitions. Ideally, these matches would continue across multiple school years.

WHAT IS CROSS-AGE PEER MENTORING?

Peer helping and tutoring programs have been popular in U.S. schools for decades and are often seen as a great way to build leadership and communication skills in youth while engaging them in academic activities, such as homework completion or test preparation. While these approaches all have benefits, it is important to distinguish them from cross age peer mentoring, which has a different emphasis and structure. These programs are “cross-age” because there is a gap between the age of the mentor and mentee, which allows for effective role modeling and positions the mentor as a wiser and older individual, as with adult-youth mentoring. This mentoring model focuses exclusively on youth-youth relationships. Cross-age peer mentoring is most defined by the emphasis on the match. The relationship between mentor and mentee is the primary focus.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

To the Mentee: These programs have shown a positive impact on...

- Connectedness to school and peers – Feelings of competency and self-efficacy – Grades and academic achievement – Prosocial behavior and attitudes.

To the Mentor: For mentors, there have been reported improvements in...

- Connectedness to school – Self-esteem – Empathy and moral reasoning
- Intrapersonal communication and conflict resolution skills – Relationships with parents

Analysis of the research also indicates that the impacts, for both mentors and mentees, may be more pronounced if mentors are of high school age and if

there is at least a two-year age difference between mentor and mentee (hence, the importance of a cross age peer model in which there is some developmental hierarchy between mentor and mentee) (Karcher, 2007).

THE RISK OF A CROSS-AGE MENTORING MODEL:

Mentors and mentees may not fully understand their roles—Being a “wise and trusted” source of guidance is not an easy role for a teenager. Adult mentors are successful, in part, because they often have life experience and knowledge that provide both wisdom they can share with a mentee and context for their role as a support to youth. Typically, peer mentors do not have such life experience to draw on. They will need extra training on the role of a mentor, tips for being supportive to others, and instructions on where to turn for help with problems that are beyond their power to address. Program expectations that might be obvious to an adult may need to be spelled out to youth early and often, such as the importance of timeliness or the need to call in if they are unable to make a meeting. Mentees may not understand how a mentor can help them reach their goals, feel awkward or intimidated working with a slightly older student, or feel that a referral to the program is a form of punishment. They need thorough pre-match orientation to get them off to a good start. Both mentors and mentees need a lot of explanation from the program about exactly how they will be working together and what they can achieve with their mentoring relationship.

Peer mentors can sometimes provide negative role modeling—High school-age mentors can be very influential figures for younger students, who often look up to these older peers in ways that they would not look up to an adult mentor. This is a powerful role for teenagers to fill and there is always the danger that they will model

negative behaviors and attitudes for their mentee. The last thing you want in your program are mentors who, intentionally or not, encourage the very antisocial or delinquent behaviors your program hopes to address, a circumstance some researchers have termed “deviancy training” (Patterson, Dishion, & Yoerger, 2000). Thorough screening, ongoing training and support, regular check-ins with mentor and mentee, and match supervision can help alleviate these problems.

Peer mentoring relationships may struggle with consistency and quality—

The social dynamics of peer relationships give mentors the power to do both great good and great harm to the mentees with whom they are working. It can be traumatic to mentees when mentors fail to show up for meetings or appear indifferent to them.

Mentees may feel rejected, and there is considerable potential for them to internalize negative feelings about themselves or the program. Program staff must always explain to mentees why their mentor is unable to make a scheduled meeting. Mentors who consistently miss meetings need reminders about the importance of consistent participation. And if mentors need to drop out of the program, for whatever reason, a termination activity can minimize any negative feelings and help both mentor and mentee find closure about the relationship. Relationship quality can also be a concern in peer mentoring programs. As with adult mentors, peer mentors can feel overwhelmed by the problems and needs of the youth they are working with. Because of their lack of life experience, they may not have answers to tough questions or know how to provide appropriate help. Mentors and mentees may have personality conflicts they are unable to voice to staff, or they may dislike program activities and respond by acting out or failing

to participate. Supervisory staff needs to be able to perceive these sometimes subtle problems and help matches work through them. A cross-age peer mentoring relationship is a powerful form of youth development, but one that cannot be left to its own devices. When young people are helping other young people, program staff must provide extra context, structure, and support. Strategies for providing proper mentor screening, increased participant training, engaging activities, and extensive ongoing match supervision are addressed in the remaining sections of this guidebook.

HOW WILL “ONE UP, ONE DOWN CROSS-AGE MENTORING MODULE” LOOK?

- It will either take place in an afterschool program setting, Friday Fun Festivities setting or within the youth department programming of church to which it is affiliated.
- The Program staff will select one academic, one extra-curricular and one social/emotional activity around which the Mentor will focus his time with his mentee around. Consistency is key to a successful mentor-mentee relationship.
- Academic Activity will be chosen based upon the mentee’s report card assessment.
- Extra-curricular Activity will be based upon the Mentor’s special gift/talent (i.e. science, chess, bowling, music, etc.)
- Social/Emotional Activity this will explicitly be a character building and self-esteem building activity of repetition. For example, The Mentor will share a quote at the beginning of his time with his mentee. He will engage his mentee around the quote to ensure that the Mentee understands

what is being shared and the outcome will be for the Mentee to set a goal around that quote to accomplish between meetings.

HOW WILL “PRINCESS TO QUEEN CROSS-AGE MENTORING MODULE” LOOK?

- It will either take place in an afterschool program setting, Friday Fun Festivities setting or within the youth department programming of church to which it is affiliated.
- The Program staff will select one academic, one extra-curricular and one social/emotional activity around which the Mentor will focus his time with his mentee around. Consistency is key to a successful mentor-mentee relationship. □ Academic Activity will be chosen based upon the mentee’s report card assessment.
- Extra-curricular Activity will be based upon the Mentor’s special gift/talent (i.e. science, chess, bowling, music, etc.)
- Social/Emotional Activity this will explicitly be a character building and self-esteem building activity of repetition. The female Mentor will use as a guide the book, “Preparing the Princess to be Queen”. Specifically, she will use the “31 Successpirations for the Princess” as motivational quotes and develop interactive exercises inspired by the book. A goal will be established for the Mentee to accomplish between meetings.

APPENDIX G

HEALING COMMUNITIES

Dr. Harold Dean Trulear

*Professor of applied Theology, Howard University School of Divinity; National Director; **Healing Communities USA**; @onthebloccdoc*

Healing Communities: A faith-based reentry program for the reintegration of former prisoners

Healing Communities is a framework for a distinct form of ministry to men and women returning from or at risk of incarceration, their families and the larger community. Healing Communities challenges congregations to become Stations of Hope for those persons affected by the criminal justice system through the mobilization of existing resources within the congregation, specifically the formal and informal networks characteristic of congregational life, and the religious ideas of forgiving, healing, redemption and reconciliation. Healing Communities identifies eight basic components of action for congregations, each built upon existing strengths, all performed within the existing ministry structure of the church. As one church official noted in reviewing the concept, "Any church can do this; every church should do this."

The Healing Communities framework responds to the key criminogenic needs of persons returning from incarceration: pro-social thinking/attitudes, social support/families and friends, and impulsivity/decision-making. By building relationships with men and women returning from incarceration- returning citizens- as well helping families to be a support system for their member coming home, Healing Communities congregations gain the trust necessary to impart new values, and the accountability necessary for making good decisions.

The eight components are:

1. Stigma Reduction and Welcoming Supportive Atmosphere

Through the development of educational and inspirational materials, Healing Communities offers assistance in bringing the issue of incarceration and recovery to new visibility in congregations. The aim is to heighten awareness surrounding reentry, help families reduce the sense of stigma and shame over having incarcerated loved ones and create a welcoming environment for returning citizens. Specific resources within the religious tradition (such as the narratives about the criminal behavior or incarceration of Biblical figures) provide content for discussion.

2. Family Identification

With heightened awareness and reduced stigma, congregations will identify a family or families within the congregation to participate in the ministry. Often, this is done through having an altar call for families of the incarcerated, leadership's disclosure of their relationships to incarcerated persons, or going to the correctional facility and

having inmates identify their individual or family masjid, church, temple, etc.

3. Formal and Informal Support

Congregations will be encouraged to provide support for the family of the incarcerated and/or at risk persons through pastoral counseling and providing a formal or informal support group to walk with the family and the returning citizen through the period of reentry. Special emphasis will be given to supporting children of the incarcerated through mentoring and supportive services to grandparents and other elderly relatives serving as care givers. Preparation should be made for the return of the incarcerated members and the shift in family dynamics.

4. Visitation and Family Connectivity

Congregations will be trained to both assist the family visiting their incarcerated members, as well as keep in touch themselves, through letter writing and visitations. Sometimes families have trouble visiting because of distance. Congregational support can range from something as simple as providing transportation, or even some benevolent support if long distance travel is involved. In addition, congregations can assist families by accompanying them on the trip required in order to visit. Letter writing and sending cards, bulletins, sermon notes and other forms of written communication assist in family and congregational connectivity, which reduces the likelihood of recidivism. Clergy visits and visits from fathers have been documented as the types of visits most likely to reduce recidivism. Finally, congregations can assist in keeping lines of communication open via telephone through financial support for the family.

5. Volunteering

Congregations will be exposed to life skill development programs in jails and prisons and encouraged to provide volunteers for these efforts. While many jails and prisons have churches that come in and provide worship services and Bible Studies, their chaplains often cite other needs that are equally as pressing. "I have a long waiting list of churches that want to do worship services," declared one long time chaplain in Ohio, "What I need are volunteers who will help with life skills – how do you balance a check book, get a driver's license, read a bus schedule," he continued. "We need tutors to help with reading and writing, and mentors for good parenting skills."

6. Mentoring

Mentoring is a valuable component of Healing Communities where volunteers serve as mentors to both youth and adults. These mentors are dedicated individuals that are willing to walk with and coach youth and even adults, some of whom are returning home to a world very different than the one they left. Our program uses the Amachi model of mentoring, which has been in existence for over 10 years and is currently operating in 40 states. Amachi Mentoring uses caring volunteers to mentor youth and adults who want and need another positive role model in their lives. Volunteers are asked to spend at least 4 hours a month with their mentee and commit to mentoring for at least one year. We recommend that they correspond with

their mentee via email, phone, or text during the times that they don't meet. These mentors will be screened and trained, and will be expected to listen to, encourage, support and assist their mentees as they go through any difficult times and face certain challenges. The emphasis of the program is that mentors spend time with mentees that have been impacted by incarceration; whether it be directly, one of their parents or family members; or indirectly, their community or neighborhood has a higher than normal rate of incarceration.

7. Network of referrals

Congregations will be introduced to and connected with resources available in the community for persons impacted by incarceration. Given the needs of these persons coming home, congregations must identify what organizations providing housing, employment and employment training, health care assistance and other services that support successful reentry, who they are and be ready to refer. Having a referral network for services allows congregations to concentrate on mobilizing their assets of values and relationships.

8. Public Policy

Congregations will be familiarized with local, state and federal policies that affect the lives of the incarcerated and returning citizens and their families. This includes legislation and policies at all levels of government concerning such issues as prison and jail conditions, sentencing and available alternatives to incarceration, services and structures related to reentry, and disproportionate minority confinement.

APPENDIX H MCQ INSTRUMENT

Name: _____ Date: _____



Section II: What do you focus on in your match?

Part 1. Each mentor is unique, so each has a different approach. Please help us understand your approach by listing your three most important focuses (things you want to do as a mentor). Next, rank them from one to three to tell us which is your most important focus ("1" is most important).

<i>Your Three Most Important Focuses as a Mentor</i>		Rank
A)		
B)		
C)		

Part 2. If the item you ranked "1" above is your most important focus, how important do you consider the focuses listed below? Please tell us how important each focus is to you by choosing a number from the scale at the bottom of the page. Remember, there are no "right" answers—each mentor has a different approach.

1. Sharing your life experiences with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
2. Having times when you do nothing but fun things with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
3. Getting your mentee to develop his/her character (be honest, responsible, etc.)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
4. Doing activities with your mentee that get him/her to think (like reading, puzzles, educational games, etc.)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
5. Encouraging your mentee to push beyond what is comfortable or easy (to expect more of him/herself)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
6. Focusing on feelings and emotional things with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
7. Making time to goof around, laugh, and have light-hearted fun with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
8. Teaching your mentee to manage or improve his/her behavior (control impulses, make better decisions, etc.)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
9. Doing or saying things to improve your mentee's attitude towards school (or keep it positive if it is already good)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
10. Exposing your mentee to new ideas and experiences?	1 2 3 4 5 6
11. Telling your mentee about your job?	1 2 3 4 5 6
12. Having time when you and your mentee just hang out together (no particular activity to do)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
13. Getting your mentee to care more about other people?	1 2 3 4 5 6
14.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15. Getting your mentee to develop stronger skills and interests?	1 2 3 4 5 6
16. Spending time just talking with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
17. Having fun (yourself) while you are with your mentee?	1 2 3 4 5 6
18. Teaching your mentee social skills (like table manners, how to meet people, etc.)?	1 2 3 4 5 6
19. Involving academics in the match?	1 2 3 4 5 6
20.	1 2 3 4 5 6

1	2	Getting your mentee to think about serious issues in his/her life (school, relationships, etc.)?			
Helping your mentee with schoolwork	Not very important	PRETTY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	MOST IMPORTANT

APPENDIX I YMS



Youth Mentoring Survey, v1.23

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John Harris, Applied Research Consulting
Michael Nakkula, Project IF "Inventing the Future"

For more information please visit:
www.MentoringEvaluation.com

Direct inquiries to:
JHarris@MentoringEvaluation.com

OFFICE USE ONLY: Match ID: _____ DOM: _____ Has Other Active Matches? Y ☐ / N ☐

Name: _____ Date: _____ How old are you? _____ I am a: BOY ☐ or a GIRL ☐

How does your match feel? For each sentence, please choose a number from the scale below to say how true it is for you.

1 = Not at all True ----- 2 = A Little True ----- 3 = Pretty True ----- 4 = Very True

1. I talk with my mentor when I have problems or things that worry me.	1	2	3	4
2. My mentor lets me choose what we do, or else we choose it together.	1	2	3	4
3. I have learned a lot from my mentor.	1	2	3	4
4. My mentor makes me happy.	1	2	3	4
5. My mentor and I hit it off right away (liked each other quickly).	1	2	3	4
6. My mentor and I are close (very good friends).	1	2	3	4
7. I just want my mentor to be fun, not someone who helps with schoolwork or problems.	1	2	3	4
8. My mentor focuses too much on school.	1	2	3	4
9. My mentor makes me feel special.	1	2	3	4
10. My mentor is a good match for me.	1	2	3	4
11. I am doing better at school because of my mentor's help.	1	2	3	4
12. I know a lot about my mentor's life (his/her family, job, etc.).	1	2	3	4
13. I want my mentor to teach me how to do things.	1	2	3	4
14. I wish my mentor would not try so hard to get me to talk about things I don't want to talk about.	1	2	3	4
15. My mentor has helped me with problems in my life.	1	2	3	4
16. I can always count on my mentor (to show up, to do what he/she promises, etc.).	1	2	3	4
17. My mentor and I like to do the same things.	1	2	3	4
18. My mentor really cares about me.	1	2	3	4
19. I am willing to try new things that my mentor suggests (foods, activities, etc.).	1	2	3	4
20. I wish my mentor would not get on my case so much (about how I act, what I wear, etc.).	1	2	3	4
21. My mentor helps me get in less trouble (make better decisions, behave better, etc.).	1	2	3	4
22. I get to see my mentor regularly.	1	2	3	4
23. My mentor and I like to talk about the same things.	1	2	3	4
24. My mentor knows what is going on in my life.	1	2	3	4
25. I want my mentor to help me do better at school.	1	2	3	4

Please go on to the next page.

Name: _____ Date: _____



SECTION 2: What do you do with your mentor?

Directions: Please choose a number from the scale below to tell us how often you do different things with your mentor.

1=Never ----- 2=Less than half the time ----- 3=Half the time ----- 4=More than half the time ----- 5=Every time

1. Do activities that are really fun?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Talk about things you hope will happen in your life (your hopes and dreams)?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Do new things--things you never did before you got matched?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Goof around and do things that make you laugh?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Talk about problems you have or things that worry you?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Talk about how you are doing at school?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Just hang out and do things like watch tv, eat, or play games together?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Talk together about kids you know (friends, brothers/sisters, neighbors, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Talk about how to behave well and stay out of trouble (self-control, making better decisions, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Do things that are boring or that you do not like.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Talk about good things that happen to you (things that make you happy)?	1	2	3	4	5
12. Learn about things that interest you (Interests are things you like or things that can keep your attention).	1	2	3	4	5
13. Do the thing that you really wanted to do that day (your top choice)?	1	2	3	4	5
14. Talk about any bad things that happen in your life?	1	2	3	4	5
15. Work on school assignments or projects together?	1	2	3	4	5
16. Do something that is a big deal, like traveling or going to a special event?	1	2	3	4	5
17. Talk about the things you care about the most?	1	2	3	4	5
18. Talk about how to be a good person (being honest, responsible, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
19. Do activities with kids you know (friends, brothers/sisters, neighbors, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
20. Go places you had never been before you got matched?	1	2	3	4	5
21. Talk about your family (how you're getting along with them, what it's like at home, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5
22. Do activities that teach you something or make you think (like reading, puzzles, educational games, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5

23. Where do you meet with your mentor? (check all that apply)

Wherever we choose ☐₁ In school ☐₂ At a supervised site (other than school) ☐₃ Email/Phone ☐₄

24. Over the past few months, how often have you usually gotten to see your mentor?

Less than once a month ☐₁ Once a month ☐₂ At least twice a month ☐₃ At least once a week ☐₄

25. When you get together with your mentor, how much time do you usually spend together?

One hour or less ☐₁ A few hours ☐₂ About half a day ☐₃ Most of the day ☐₄

APPENDIX J
PEER MENTORING SURVEY TOOL

Peer Mentoring Evaluation (for mentees)

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree or Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
------------------------	---------------	--------------------------------	------------	---------------------

Quality/Satisfaction

1. My peer mentor and I are enjoying a high quality relationship.
1 2 3 4 5
2. I am effectively utilizing my peer mentor.
1 2 3 4 5
3. I am benefiting from the mentoring relationship.
1 2 3 4 5
4. The peer mentoring program runs smoothly.
1 2 3 4 5
5. I would recommend the peer mentoring program to others.
1 2 3 4 5

Learning

From working with my peer mentor...

- 6 I am gaining a better sense of how to be successful and involved
1 2 3 4 5
- 7 I am gaining new skills.
1 2 3 4 5
- 8 I am becoming more open minded and able to consider others' feelings and attitudes.
1 2 3 4 5
- 9 I am improving my ability to communicate effectively with others
1 2 3 4 5

Relationship, Respect, and Communication

10. My peer mentor is easy to talk to.
1 2 3 4 5
11. I respect my peer mentor.
1 2 3 4 5
12. My peer mentor is well-qualified to be a mentor.
1 2 3 4 5

Peer Mentoring Evaluation (for peer mentors)

Peer Mentoring Evaluation (for mentees)

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Quality/Satisfaction

13. My peer mentor and I are enjoying a high quality relationship.

1 2 3 4 5

14. I am effectively utilizing my peer mentor.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I am benefiting from the mentoring relationship.

1 2 3 4 5

16. The peer mentoring program runs smoothly.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I would recommend the peer mentoring program to others.

1 2 3 4 5

Learning

From working with my peer mentor...

18. I am gaining a better sense of how to be successful and

1 2 3 4 5

19. I am gaining new skills.

1 2 3 4 5

20. I am becoming more open minded and able to consider others' feelings and attitude

1 2 3 4 5

21. I am improving my ability to communicate effectively with others.

1 2 3 4 5

Relationship, Respect, and Communication

18. My peer mentor is easy to talk to.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I respect my peer mentor.

1 2 3 4 5

20. My peer mentor is well-qualified to be a mentor.

1 2 3 4 5

Peer Mentoring Evaluation (for peer mentors)

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree or Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
------------------------	---------------	--------------------------------	------------	---------------------

Quality/Satisfaction

1. My mentee and I are enjoying a high quality relationship.
1 2 3 4 5
2. My mentee is effectively utilizing me as a peer mentor.
1 2 3 4 5
3. Both my mentee and I are benefiting from the mentoring relationship
1 2 3 4 5
4. The peer mentoring program runs smoothly.
1 2 3 4 5
5. I would recommend the peer mentoring program to others.
1 2 3 4 5

Learning

From becoming a peer mentor...

6. I am gaining a better sense of how to be successful and involved
1 2 3 4 5
7. I am gaining new skills.
1 2 3 4 5
8. I am becoming more open minded and able to consider others' feelings and attitudes.
1 2 3 4 5
9. I am improving my ability to communicate effectively with others
1 2 3 4 5

Relationship, Respect, and Communication

10. It is easy to talk to my mentee.
1 2 3 4 5
11. My mentee and I respect each other.
1 2 3 4 5

I feel well-prepared to be a mentor.

Quality/Satisfaction

12. My mentee and I are enjoying a high quality relationship.
1 2 3 4 5

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. | My mentee is effectively utilizing me as a peer mentor. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | Both my mentee and I are benefiting from the mentoring relationship | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | The peer mentoring program runs smoothly. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I would recommend the peer mentoring program to others. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Learning

From becoming a peer mentor...

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. | I am gaining a better sense of how to be successful and involved | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | I am gaining new skills. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. | I am becoming more open minded and able to consider others' feelings and attitudes. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | I am improving my ability to communicate effectively with others. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Relationship, Respect, and Communication

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 21. | It is easy to talk to my mentee. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. | My mentee and I respect each other. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | I feel well-prepared to be a mentor. | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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